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Children's Object Story-Sermons

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By
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A boy once received a watch in which was engraved:

From his constant friend
His Father

Now, in token of a comradeship of many years, the boy, grown to man's estate, dedicates this little volume to
The Father

Preface

THE writer's apology for this little volume in a world of books is that he has found no similar work and therefore has been led to wonder if these object sermons might not be of use to brother pastors and others who speak to children from time to time. He is quite convinced from personal experience that, though children listen intently to a brief interesting sermon, they listen far more eagerly if an object be introduced or an experiment worked before their eyes. He has also found that, while the lambs of the flock are interested in object talks, the ears of the grown-up sheep pay even closer attention.

The objects described, for the most part, can be found in every household. A few are easily purchased at small cost. None of them are too cumbersome for pulpit use. Concerning the experiments it is needless to add that all of them should be worked out carefully beforehand.

A few of the ideas upon which these addresses are based are not wholly original but were collected at random from stories and clippings during the past few years. Since the writer had until recently no idea of publishing this volume, he made no note of the sources from which they came. He regrets therefore that he is unable to give credit to those to whom credit is due. But in every case the idea has been completely worked over and adapted to meet the needs of his particular audience. These addresses are indeed simply suggestive, nothing more. With the object and the facts it can serve to illustrate in mind, any reader can weave together his own story or sermon.

In the hope that these talks will be helpful to pastors and to all child lovers who delight to look into the eager upturned faces of children and that, through their agency, they will inspire many hearers to loving deeds and a Christlike life, the writer sends forth this book.

O. T. B.

Chappaqua, N. Y.

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I

The Singing Brush

(*Objects: The guest-room hair brush, an old shoe brush and a small shoe or clothes brush that makes the sound of "Cuckoo" when it is pressed against any surface. The latter, called a "Cuckoo Brush," can be purchased at a novelty store for twenty-five cents.*)

ONCE upon a time there were three brushes: an ivory hair brush, a large shoe brush and a little shoe brush. This is the hair brush and you can easily see how beautiful it is. It was admired and valued greatly by its owner because it was made of ivory and the finest bristles and because it had gold letters on its back. It was kept on the bureau in the guest-room among many other beautiful things. But, oh, how vain and stuck-up the hair brush was! Every time he worked he looked in the looking-glass and admired himself!

The two shoe brushes were kept in an old box down in the hall. The large shoe brush did nothing all day long but complain and

growl. Said he: "I'm tired of the life we lead. We lie here in this miserable box in the darkness and we never see what is going on. Now and then we are taken out, and all we do is to brush the dust off people's shoes and get all sticky with blacking and then we are thrown back in the box again. Just think of that hair brush up-stairs, the stuck-up thing, always looking in the glass and being praised by people! He does nice easy work while we do hard mean work. And nobody cares about us."

But the little shoe brush spoke up in his gentle way: "Well, it is rather trying to stay here in the darkness and do hard tiresome work, but all the same I am very glad we have work to do. I think it is splendid to be able to work and to do things for others, no matter how disagreeable the tasks may be. The hair brush may be very beautiful, and may have much honor paid him, but I think our work is just as important as his. People would not look nice if they went around with their hair beautifully brushed and their shoes soiled and dusty. I'm proud of the work we do, and when I work I try to do it just as well as I can. And I always sing, for singing makes other people happy."

The large shoe brush sneered at these

remarks and told the little brush he would get over it when he was older. But the little brush said bravely: "No, indeed! I'm always going to help others and do the hardest, meanest work if necessary, and sing when I do it."

Just then a hand reached into the box and took out the brushes. "Oh," said a voice, "here is that nice little brush which does such good work. I know it will shine my shoes well and I want them to look as bright as possible, for I am going to church." These words made the little brush swell up with pride. It began to work as hard as it could, and as it worked, it sang. Just hear it: (Brush shoulder or arm with it.) You may think that sounds like "Cuckoo, Cuckoo," but that was not the song the little brush sang. Do you want to know what it was? The words it sang over and over again were these: "I'm glad! I'm glad!" To work for others made it glad, and to help others should make us very glad too.

II

Let Your Light Shine

(*Objects: A short candle, matches, tumbler, candlestick, two small blocks of wood. Light the candle.*)

I WONDER if you can tell me how to put this candle out? Blow it out, that's right. Now I am going to show you another way to put the candle out, a way that will surprise you. But I want to tell you, first of all, a beautiful verse in the Bible and I want you to remember it while I am speaking to you. It is found in the Gospel of Matthew and it is this: YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. Jesus spoke these words and He meant that His followers ought to be shining lights making bright this earth of ours. He also said that it would be foolish to allow anything to cover a light, for the light would not shine. The proper place, said He, for a light is upon a candlestick, for then it will shine steadily and brightly.

I wonder what will happen if I cover this light? Let me put this glass tumbler over it.

See it is getting dimmer and dimmer—there, it has gone out! What has happened? The tumbler has kept away the good pure air from the light and so the candle flickered and went out. It is all the fault of the tumbler. And by the way, I hope we don't sleep in our rooms with the windows all pulled down tight. If we shut out the good fresh air and let all the bad stale air collect inside, we shall wake up in the morning, I know, with a headache, feeling sleepy, tired and mean.

Christian people must never let anything darken their lives, for then they are liable to suffer great harm. Some people let sin spread over their lives and sin shuts God out, and such people have a hard time of it. There was once a little boy who let himself be covered with lies. If you asked him about anything or touched him anywhere, you found just one lie after another. He was not a shining light, was he? And there was once a little girl who was mean and disagreeable and vain and snippy. These horrid things had spread over her life and therefore nobody liked her or wanted her around.

Suppose we think we can dabble with wrong things a little, suppose we let wrong things cover our lives half-way? (Place one

of the blocks on each side of candle and stand tumbler on them over candle.) What will happen then? You see the light goes out, though it takes a little while longer. We can have no companionship with evil, for evil will stifle us and shut out God and goodness and the light cast by our lives will go out.

What should we do if there is a covering over a light? (Place tumbler over light and then quickly pull it away before the light goes out.) We must take that covering away—at once, without a moment's delay! If there is a covering of sin over our lives WE MUST PULL IT AWAY AT ONCE! And keep all things away that would make our lives dark and useless! But there is something better yet that we should do with a shining light. Put it on a candlestick! (Place candle on candlestick and hold it high overhead.) Then it will shine out far and wide and make bright all dark places. We must lift up our lives, HIGH UP, and keep them close to God. Then they will shine with unceasing brightness and make glad many hearts.

III

The Owl That Disobeyed

(*Object: A stuffed owl, or a stuffed bird of any kind.*)

I WONDER what kind of a bird this is? An owl, that's right. You must not be afraid of him for he is quite harmless now. He is stuffed, as you can see, but once he was alive and flying about. Perhaps you wonder why I brought him here. I thought you might like to see him for I have an interesting story to tell you about him.

His name was Johnny Owl and he lived with Father and Mother Owl in a hole in an old apple tree. Father and Mother Owl taught him how to fly and how to catch grasshoppers and crickets and mice. They told him many things that owls should know and among others they warned him never to fly at any bright shining object. Many owls had done this, they said, and had never come back. If he saw anything that was bright and shining, anything that looked like a big round moon, he must fly away from it as fast

as he could. But one night Johnny Owl saw a bright round object coming towards him. Like so many boys and girls, he thought he knew more than his parents, so he laughed and said he must see what this was. It looked so beautiful and interesting that he could not take his eyes off it. He flew as fast as he could towards it. It grew bigger and bigger. Johnny thought it looked good enough to eat, thought how nice it would be to peck at it. He flew right at it and then, bang, something struck him on the head and when Johnny Owl was picked up, he was very, very still. He would never fly again and Father and Mother Owl would never know what happened to him, for Johnny Owl was dead. Do you know what that bright round object was? It was the electric headlight on a trolley car. Johnny Owl had flown at it and had struck against the front of the car. I know this is true for I was on that car and I picked him up and had him stuffed and here he is.

Lots of children are like Johnny Owl. Father and mother tell them they must not touch many things that look so nice and bright and attractive. Many candies look red and good, but mother, who knows they will make us sick, says we must not eat them.

Lobster salad, coffee, tea and many other things look nice but mother says we cannot have them. Boys like to climb on back of wagons and shinny up high poles and jump off steep places but father says, "No." Remember always that it is a good thing to mind what father and mother say, for they know best. If we don't, we may be hurt like Johnny Owl. There is wise advice in these words in our Bibles:—"Hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the teaching of thy mother."

IV

The Bad Family

(*Objects: Boy and girl dolls, or better yet, have some one draw pictures of boys and girls to represent the characters mentioned below.*)

I SUPPOSE we all know that at times we are a great deal like that little girl with the curl. You remember how the verse goes:

"There was a little girl who had a little curl
Right down the middle of her forehead.
When she was good, she was very, very good,
But when she was bad, she was horrid."

Now there are many boys and girls who are mostly good all the time and others who are mostly naughty all the time. We often find families like that and I am going to tell you about two such families—the Bad family and the Good family. This morning I am going to introduce to you the boys and girls of the Bad family. In these families the children all have middle names.

The first is a little boy whose name is

Charlie Cross-Patch. He scowls most of the time, is very disagreeable and pouts and answers back. If some one asks him pleasantly to do something, he says: "No, I don't want to," or "No, I won't." If any one so much as touches him, he cries out: "Now you stop." He is not a nice boy to have around.

The second is another boy whose name is Teddy Tattle-Tale. He is all the time telling tales on his brothers and sisters. He tires mother out by the things he says about others. He is always watching at the table to see if the others do anything they shouldn't and if they do, he cries: "Oh, mother, see what sister did." The boys in the neighborhood do not like him because he is such a tattle-tale and his brothers and sisters think he is very mean.

There is still another boy, Sammy Slow-Poke. He is a big boy and awfully lazy. If he is sent to the store, he wanders slowly along and generally forgets what he is sent for and takes hours to come home. If father asks him to cut the grass, he is a long time getting ready and spends most of the day mowing the lawn, for part of the time he sits down and eats apples or swings in the hammock. Mother and father are all the time

saying to him: "Oh, hurry up, you slow-poke!" He is a boy who cannot be depended on!

Now there is a girl in that family named Sally Selfish. She watches her brothers and her sister and tries to take their things so that she can have them for herself. She wants the biggest piece of pie and the best part of every box of candy. She is as greedy as can be and she cries out very often: "You give me that!" She always wants to be waited on and never does things for other people. I do not know a more trying hard-to-get-along-with little girl than Sally Selfish.

Then there is the last and smallest member of the family, a tiny girl named Katie Cry-Baby. She cries all the time. If sister bumps into her, she sets up an awful howl. If she falls down and scratches her hand just a bit, she screeches like an Indian. She hasn't a soft gentle cry but a loud shriek like a steam whistle and since she is crying most of the day, mother's head aches dreadfully.

Such is the Bad family. It is not a pleasant family to visit and I feel so sorry for the father and mother of that family. Don't you?

V

The Good Family

(*Object: A different set of dolls from last Sunday or a different set of pictures to represent the characters below.*)

LAST Sunday I told you about the Bad family—about Charlie Cross-Patch, Teddy Tattle-Tale, Sammy Slow-Poke, Sally Selfish and Katie Cry-Baby. I am sure you did not like any of them. To-day I want to introduce to you some members of the Good family and I know you will like them very much.

The first one is Tommy Truthful. He never tells a fib or a naughty tale. If he breaks a pitcher or an ornament, he does not hide it or deny that he did it but at once says: "Mother, I did it and I'm sorry." He is a manly boy and always owns up to everything he does that is not right. Father and mother are very proud of him.

Here is an active wide-awake little fellow named Johnny Jump-Up. He is always ready to do things. When mother wants

any one to go to the store he jumps right up and hurries off to do the errand. If father wants a box of matches for his pipe, he runs and gets them. He does everything he can for his brothers and sisters. You can imagine that he is not lazy and that he is cheerful and liked by every one.

Here is a girl named Carrie Careful. She never spots her dresses nor tears them. She is careful not to get her shoes and stockings muddy. Her hair is never mussed and she keeps her room and bureau drawers as tidy as can be. She loves to sew and helps mother dust. She knows if she is not careful about things mother will have so much more work to do and so she tries to be as neat and as tidy as possible.

There is another girl whose name is Lucy Let-Me-Do-It. She is mother's helper. She is always saying: "Oh, mother, let me do it." She tries all the time to find things to do and she never frets when asked to do anything but goes to work quickly and does everything splendidly. She and Johnny Jump-Up are such a help in the home.

There are twins in the Good family, so much alike that it is very hard for any one to tell them apart. Their names are Helen and Harry Happiness. They never cry but are

always laughing. They love flowers and plant them everywhere about the house and bring mother big bouquets whenever they can. They love the birds too and feed them and watch them and listen to them sing but they never steal their eggs nor tear down their nests. They are so happy themselves that they want every one else to be happy, so they try to cheer people up all the time. You can imagine how greatly every one loves them!

There is just one more member in that family, the little baby named Susan Sunshine. She is mother's joy and father's pet. I wish you could see her smile! She just bubbles over with sunshine and her laugh is like a chime of silver bells. She does such funny things that every one is laughing at her most of the time and when she tumbles down she does not cry but scrambles up and toddles around with a smile on her face.

Which family do you like the best? The Good family, of course.

Just try and copy after this family and see how happy both mother and father will be.

VI

A Spoiled Day

(*Objects: A half tumbler of water in which some starch has been dissolved; a small pitcher containing water into which several drops of iodine have been poured; a spoon to stir the solution.*)

THIS is the story of how a day was spoiled. It was very beautiful when it began. The night was as still as still could be. But suddenly away down in the valley a rooster crowed and then away up on a hilltop another rooster answered. All at once a robin began to sing for he saw a faint light in the east and he knew the day was coming. Then some meadow-larks flapped their wings and soared high into the sky, singing: "Wake up, everybody, for a beautiful day will soon be here." Now, while the birds were singing, the little fairy who manages these things had flown up into the heavens and had put the little stars to bed and had tucked them in between some nice fleecy clouds. Then she beckoned to

the sunbeams and how fast they came, running and dancing and playing and kissing the lovely faces of sleepy flowers and chasing butterflies and bees. Soon the dear old sun rose high in the sky and when he looked down and saw every one sleeping snug and tight in their beds, he sent some sunbeams to wake them up. One little sunbeam danced into the home of the Jones family. Mr. Jones woke up and said: "My, what a fine day!" Mrs. Jones looked out of the window and said: "Isn't it lovely!" Molly Jones said: "Oh, what beautiful blue sky and how happy the birds are!" And Johnny Jones said: "Say, it's a peach of a day, isn't it?"

The day was as calm and free from black specks of trouble as this glass is. (Show starch solution.) See how creamy white this is—there is no darkness in it. Every one in the Jones family was happy. But soon, I am sorry to say, trouble came and Johnny began it all. He came down first to breakfast and ate up Molly's banana and drank up her share of cream. Johnny's middle name, by the way, was SELFISH. Molly cried and Johnny quarrelled with her and sassed mother too. Father Jones heard all the noise and came down-stairs and you can imagine what he did to Johnny. But some

dark shadows had crept into that day—just like this. I am going to pour some trouble into the day. (Pour a little of the iodine solution into the starch—the latter will turn dark purple or black—according to strength of the iodine and water.) Father and mother were sad, Molly was in tears and Johnny was mad.

The teacher at school thought the day was most beautiful but she found that Johnny had not studied his lessons and she noticed that Molly talked and giggled and at last slapped another girl. She had to keep them after school. The day became a little darker than before. (Pour in a bit more of the solution.) At last Johnny and Molly went home, quarrelling as usual. Molly scratched Johnny and ran away. I forgot to say that Molly's middle name was SPITEFUL. Poor dear mother asked Johnny to go to the store but he said he wouldn't and the day grew very black for mother. She made him go but he fooled and played with the boys and at last broke the bag of sugar and spilled it all and when he came home and told mother, she sat down and had a good cry. It was not long before Father Jones came home. He had worked hard in the office all day and he had a headache and was tired out. Coming home on

the cars he thought how nice it would be to find mother and Molly and Johnny talking and laughing around the fire and how glad he would be to have them all jump up when he opened the door and hug and kiss him. But he found that Molly and Johnny had been put to bed and that mother's eyes were filled with tears. The day now was very black for every one. (Pour in iodine solution till all the starch solution becomes jet black; stir with spoon if necessary.)

Don't you feel sorry for that spoiled day? How many here feel sorry? Put up your hands. What was the trouble with it? Who spoiled it? I'll tell you—SELFISH AND SPITEFUL. Why should we spoil days? Why not try hard to keep every day bright and white and beautiful? Let's try!

VII

The Boy Who Ran Away

(*Objects: A glass wrapped in black containing ammonia; a glass wrapped in white containing vinegar; a figure of a boy cut out of pink litmus paper.*)

ONCE upon a time there was a boy who had a nice home and a kind father. His father gave him everything that should have made him happy, playthings and pets and games, but somehow the boy did not want to stay at home. He had been told, it is true, that there were many disagreeable and unpleasant things in the world which he would not meet if he lived quietly in his father's house. But he was quite willful and so he ran away. He took all the money he had and some food and one night slipped out of the door and ran as hard as he could. By and by he came to two roads. One was a narrow steep road leading up the side of a high hill and the other was a wide smooth road that led down into a deep cool looking valley. The boy

stopped and wondered which road he should take but it wasn't very long before he decided to take the wide smooth road for it would be the easier to walk on, he thought. So on he went, down and down and down. By and by he lost his money and then he found he had eaten all his food. He was in the land of famine now and he was very hungry. When any one goes away from the Father's love he always arrives sooner or later at the land of famine. But the boy kept on and suddenly down at the bottom of that valley something happened.

Suppose we say this is the boy. You mustn't smile at the funny looking boy I have cut out of this pink paper. You see he is really quite a nice looking boy with no black spots upon him. Here he goes down and down into the valley but he doesn't see what is at the bottom. It is a black pit, the pit of sin. On he goes and at last he falls into this pit and does many wrong things. (Drop the figure into the ammonia and it will turn blue.) You see that his fair life has been darkened. Then how he cried! He was hungry, homesick and frightened. But he came to himself and said: "I will arise and climb back up this hill and go to my father and say to him: 'Father, I have wandered away from you. I

know I did wrong. I did many evil things but I am sorry and I want you to forgive me and let me live again in your house.'" Back up the hill he climbed and at last came near his home. His old father was watching for him and ran to meet him and kissed him many times and told him how glad he was that he had come home. Then his father brought out some good clothes and had a feast prepared and the boy felt much comforted and happy and made resolves that he would never leave his father again but would always try to do his will. The boy having repented and been forgiven by his father became like his old self. It was just as though he had plunged into a fountain of clear water that had washed away all the darkness from his life. (Put the figure into the vinegar and it will change to pink.) This is just what happened.

Now what I have told you is a parable, and it is the story of any one of us who, having run away from God, comes back to the Father and asking His forgiveness, receives it freely.

VIII

The Lion of Lucerne

(*Object: A statue or carving of the Lion of Lucerne.*)

IN a city far across the sea in a country of snow-capped mountains, beside the blue waters of a lake, is a wonderful monument. It is carved out of the solid stone of a high cliff that looks down upon the lake. Do you know what kind of a monument it is and why it was made?

Once upon a time there reigned on the throne of France a king named Louis and a beautiful queen named Marie Antoinette. The king wanted some brave loyal soldiers to defend him and the queen, so he sent to Switzerland and some Swiss soldiers came and were always near him. By and by dreadful fighting occurred and the king and queen had to hurry away from the palace. But the brave Swiss in their red uniforms were ordered to stay and defend the palace, and like a wall of granite they stood at their posts. They did not think of running away,

for they had promised to be faithful, so when they were attacked, they fought as bravely as they could but, being few in number, they were almost all killed.

When the people in Switzerland heard of their brave deed they wished to erect a monument to them, so they asked their greatest sculptor to make one. He came to a city called Lucerne and there he saw this tall cliff and out of it he carved the body of a dying lion. Ivy grows about the statue, and down the rock a beautiful mountain stream leaps to a pool below in which the statue is reflected. All around tower great grim mountains like sentinels keeping watch over this memorial to the brave Swiss soldiers. I have a small model of it here. You see it represents a lion dying, with a spear thrust through his side. He lies on the shield of France which he is trying to protect. Over the top are these words: "To the faithfulness and bravery of the Swiss" and beneath, the date: "1792."

This monument speaks to us of FAITHFULNESS. It is a great thing to be true, it is a great thing to keep a promise, it is a great thing to be faithful! Everywhere in the world men and women are looking for people who will be faithful, for faithfulness is a quality

in life that is loved, valued and honored. Its worth is above rubies and diamonds.

God asks one great thing of us. He asks us to be faithful;—faithful in keeping His commandments, faithful in doing His work day by day, faithful in following Jesus Christ our Lord and Master. May we all pray as our prayer to-day this verse of that familiar hymn:

"Give me a faithful heart,
Likeness to Thee,
That each departing day
Henceforth may see
Some work of love begun,
Some deed of kindness done,
Some wanderer sought and won,
Something for Thee."

IX

The Other Side of the Moon

(*Object: A picture or an ash tray or an ornament representing the moon.*)

HOW many of us have seen the moon? We all have, of course. How many sides of the moon have we seen? Only one side. It is funny, isn't it, that only one side is turned towards us. Whenever we look at it we see the side with the old man in the moon smiling at us, just as we see him here. But it has another side, yet we seldom think of that.

The other day Johnny Jones was punished. Mother did not give him any dessert for supper and put him to bed as soon as he had finished eating instead of letting him stay up as he usually did. Johnny cried and cried and thought mother very cruel and unjust. What do you suppose he had done? Mother had told him that he must not go out of the yard, but he had said to himself: "Why, Jimmy and Harry and Ted play in the street and spin tops on the sidewalk. Why can't I?"

Then along had come some boys and they had coaxed him and out he had gone and played for quite a time till mother saw him. While he was thinking of these things Daddy came in to kiss him good-night and Johnny told him what had happened. Daddy listened and then he asked Johnny some questions about the moon and told him about the other side of the moon. "Johnny," he said, "you are only looking at your side. You must remember there is another side to what happened to-day. The paper this morning told of a little boy who thought he knew more than father and mother, so he disobeyed and ran out of his yard and played with his tennis ball in the street. For a while nothing happened and he thought father and mother foolish and old fashioned. But all at once his ball rolled across the street, and running after it, he fell in front of an automobile. The chauffeur did all he could to stop, but he could not and mother's heart broke when some men carried her little boy, now so white and still, into the house. His father hurried right home and he found mother crying beside the body of her little boy who would never run and play, never laugh and sing again. You see father and mother know best. You must remember, as I said about

the moon, that there is always another side to things which often we do not see."

Johnny tried to remember this as he grew up and when he disputed with any one, or became cross or wondered why people acted as they did to him, he would say to himself that there was another side to it all. He made it a point to try and see this other side if he could. He became more patient and kind to people and people grew to love and trust him.

It is worth while to remember that there is another side to the moon!

X

A Lie in the Heart

(*Objects: Draw a large heart with black ink on a white sheet of paper then dip a match-stick in a slice of lemon and write* LIE *inside of the heart; a cdndle and matches.*)

A FRIEND told me this story and I believe it is true, for it is like so many things that happen in life. There was once a little girl named Agnes who lived with her father and mother in a beautiful home. She had many toys to play with and lots of nice things to eat and a cozy white bed to sleep in and she was really very happy. Her father and mother tried in every way to bring her up to be a good girl and told her among many other things that she must never, never tell a naughty tale or, as it is sometimes called, a LIE. They told her how awful it was and how easy it would be to tell another if you had once told one and how if any one kept on, a terribly strong habit of telling naughty tales would be built up. All this, they said, took place in the heart.

One day mother went out and Jennie Smith came to play with Agnes. They had planned to play house, and Agnes had asked mother if they might not have the beautiful crimson and gold teacups which mother kept for best. Agnes said they were going to play the minister was coming to tea, and of course they must get out the best cups for him. But mother said no, for they were worth a great deal of money and they might break them. So when Jennie came they played house for a long time. At last it was time for the minister to arrive and they pretended their big doll was the minister. They felt quite ashamed of their plain white dishes and wished ever so much that they had more beautiful ones. Then a bad little voice whispered to Agnes and she looked at the cabinet where the crimson and gold cups were. The little voice said: "It won't matter if you take one, just one or perhaps two. No one will know the difference." Jennie looked at the cabinet too, and they whispered about it, and the longer they looked the more they wanted them. At last Agnes tiptoed over to the cabinet and unlocked it and very carefully took out two of the cups. Then what a good time they had! But at last Agnes heard mother coming and she hur-

riedly started to put the cups back, but one slipped out of her hand and broke. How scared they were now! Jennie ran out the back way home and Agnes picked up the pieces and ran up to her room. That night at supper mother said: "I suppose you had a good time playing house with Jennie. I am sure you managed to get along all right without using those crimson and gold tea-cups, didn't you?" And Agnes said: "Yes, mother." Think of that! She had told a naughty tale.

That night she dreamed a dream. She saw her heart all white and clean like this sheet of paper. There were no black spots, no horrid blots of evil on it. Then she dreamed that when she told that naughty tale an old witch came along and stamped that lie on her heart with a fiery hot iron. Oh, how it hurt! And how dreadful her heart looked! Instead of being all clean and white, across it was written an ugly brown word of three letters: L-I-E. This is the way it happened. (Light candle and pass the paper over the flame, keeping it moving to prevent it from burning, and holding the heart side UP; the heat will make the invisible lie appear in brown letters.)

Let us imagine this candle is the hot iron.

You see how it has made the word L-I-E appear on the heart.

Agnes woke up shivering and ran to mother and crawled into her bed and cried and cried and told her all about the lie in her heart. And mother said: "We will try very hard, you and I, to get that lie out of the heart. And some one will help us. The Lord Jesus will do this and will keep other lies away if we think of Him and try our best to follow Him."

XI

Forbidden Pleasures

(*Object: A fisherman's trolling spoon in which the brightly colored feathers conceal the hooks.*)

HOW many here know the story of little Red Riding Hood? We all do, of course. You remember her mother told her to take the basket of nice things and go straight to the house where her grandmother lived and not wander off the path. She must not stop to pick flowers or chase butterflies or run after any pretty birds. But you remember that little Red Riding Hood did stop to pick flowers and she did chase butterflies and run after pretty birds. She thought that mother was mean, that it would not matter if she stopped to pick a few flowers or went into the woods a little way. But mother was right after all and knew her little daughter might meet the old wolf. And because little Red Riding Hood disobeyed she met the old wolf who ate up her grandmother and almost ate her up too.

Here is a curious thing that we tie to the end of a fishing line when we want to catch fish. The fish sees it and is very much pleased by its brightness and by its gay colors and thinks it is something good to eat and so he snaps at it but he doesn't know there are sharp hooks in it. Then he is caught and we pull him into the boat. Little Red Riding Hood's mother knew that, though there were bright flowers in the woods, there were hooks there too.

I know of two little puppy dogs that love to run out and play in the road. They think it is such a nice place to roll in and they cannot seem to understand why they are punished every time they do it. But their owner knows why, for along that road automobiles and fast horses travel and the puppies might be run over. He knows there are hooks in the road.

There are some boys who want to eat a whole glass of jam, for it is red and sweet, but mother knows there are sharp hooks in it and the boy will find this out too if he eats it all, for then he will have awful pains.

Many boys and girls I know would like to play hooky from school. They would like to swing all day in hammocks, go swimming or fishing and do just what pleased them. They

have an idea that they hate school, that it is a great burden and that all the old folks, such as father and mother, the school trustees and the truant officer, are real mean to make them go. But the grown-up people know best. They know that though a life of laziness and self-pleasing seems pleasant, yet many sharp and dreadful hooks are concealed in it. Therefore, since they do not want boys and girls to grow up to be stupid blockheads and so suffer, they send them to school.

Very often when told we cannot do something we feel cross, because it seemed so nice and we wanted to do it so much but father and mother see the hooks! Therefore we must not cry or sulk when father or mother says No because they only forbid us to save us pain.

XII

The Burden Bearer

(*Object: A camel of brass or china.*)

WHEN we have visited the Zoo, we have surely seen the camels and we have laughed because they were so funny looking. Here is a brass camel that was made way across the ocean in the land where camels walk about the streets just as horses do here. Camels love warm countries where there are great stretches of desert sand. They are called Ships of the Desert, but I think a better name for them is Burden Bearers. They have one or two large humps on their backs and upon these strong humps many things can be tied. Often camels bear great burdens of boxes and bales on their backs. They have soft padded feet and since they can go without water for a long time, they are most useful in crossing deserts. There is no other animal that would take the place of the camel in desert countries. The horse has small hard hoofs and these would sink into the

sand and besides he must have water quite often and in the desert few wells are to be found. Therefore all weights and burdens must be borne by the camel and people could not do without him. Quietly and patiently he walks here and there and goes on long journeys bearing the burdens of people.

The camel has made me think of a verse in the Bible: "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." Many people are struggling with burdens too heavy for them to bear alone. A Boy Scout the other day saw an old lady trying to carry a large hamper along the street. Of course he hurried up and took the hamper from her. He bore the burden for her. In a home the other day a mother who had had a very busy day and who was tired out and not at all well, was getting supper. Her little girl was reading a nice magazine, but she saw how tired mother looked, she saw the tears in her eyes and she noticed how slowly she walked. Like a flash she jumped up and put her book down and ran to mother and said: "You go and lie down, mother. I'll get supper and set the table." She bore mother's burden. People often bear great burdens of sorrow which we can help them carry. The mother of a little boy was very

sad. She cried often as though her heart would break and the little boy in every way tried to bear her burden. He would run to her and try and comfort her. He would sing to her and be cheerful and talk to her of his books and friends, he would run errands for her and get her nice things. He was the greatest possible help to her and by and by she stopped being sad and how glad he was that he had helped.

Christ wants us to bear the burdens of other people and help them all we can.

XIII

Useless Sewing

(*Objects: Two small pieces of cloth, a needle, emery bag, thimble.*)

I WANT to give you a lesson in sewing. All girls of course should know how to sew, for it is most useful to them and a great help to others. Boys too should know how to sew, for they may go away to boarding-school or to college or be far from home and there may be no one around to sew on buttons. I had to learn to sew because I was away from home a great deal so you must watch me closely, for I am a fine sewer.

First, you find a needle and then you sharpen it and take all the rust spots off it by passing it through an emery bag. Then you get a thimble. You must be sure and get it on the right finger of the right hand. I think it is the middle finger. After you have done these things, you take the cloth you want to sew and put the two pieces together like this and then you begin. You run the needle through this way, taking small

stitches, for it pays to be very neat in sewing. But you are all smiling and laughing. What is the matter? I told you I knew how to sew and yet you are laughing. Don't you see that the cloth is all nicely sewed together? Oh, but it isn't. What is the matter anyhow? I see that I have forgotten a most important thing. I have done some useless sewing, for I forgot the most important thing of all, the thread. I have wasted time and labor because I forgot.

How sad if, as we live our lives, we forget and leave out the most important thing of all! I wonder if you can guess what it is? It is a word of four letters and it begins with L. It is the word LOVE.

The other day a little girl woke up and came down to breakfast as pretty and as neat as could be. She was a truthful little girl, she was obedient, she was good, she was always on time at school and studied her lessons well and was never kept after school. She had many good qualities but she left out the most important thing of all. She left out the word love. I am sorry to say she was quite selfish. She thought of herself first and this day, which was like every day, she showed her selfishness. She ate more than her share of everything at the

table, she never thought of helping poor tired mother with any of the housework but ran off to play with her books and dolls; she never offered to stay home in the afternoon and care for baby brother so that mother could lie down and read and rest; she would not let her little sisters and brothers play with any of her things. All that day she left out the word LOVE and her day did not amount to much, did it?

There was a boy who used to go to Sunday-school and to church but some boys laughed at him so he stopped going. He stopped reading his Bible and saying his prayers at night; he stopped thinking about God and His love and His commandments. He forgot to thank God for His watchful care and for His good gifts. He was a very nice boy in many ways but he left out the most important thing, this word love. He left out love for God, and his days and life surely did not amount to much, did they?

Let us see to it that as we work and study and live each day we do not leave out the most important thing of all in life—love.

XIV

The Elephant's Trunk

(*Object: The statue or picture of an elephant.*)

HOW many of us have seen an elephant? I am glad that nearly every one has, for an elephant is a very interesting animal. I wonder if you know that elephants are very useful when they are tamed? Over in India elephants do a great deal of work for people and they are able to work because of one most useful thing about them. Do you know what this is? Here is a small statue of an elephant. You can see that he has eyes which, though small, are very quick to see, and ears that flap to and fro to keep the flies off and that can hear the faintest sound, and a mouth with which he eats, and great tusks with which he can protect himself against any animal that might attack him, and a great broad back and strong legs. All these things are useful to him but not of much help to people. The most helpful thing that he has is his trunk!

His trunk is so strong that it can lift great logs and heavy weights. It is so delicate that we are told he can even pick up a needle with it from the ground. With this strong trunk he works for people, and helps them. Once a little girl fell into a river when no one was around save an old tame elephant. The little girl screamed and the elephant ran to the river and reached in with his trunk and caught her and saved her life. Once a wicked man tried to kill the master of an elephant but the elephant saw him and seized him with his trunk and held him fast and so protected his master. No wonder that the people of India love their elephants because they are so helpful.

Do you know that we have two things that are of more use than an elephant's trunk, two things that can do many more things and can help people far better? We have two hands, two hands that are so strong that they can lift heavy weights, two hands so delicate that they can pick up tiny objects such as needles and thimbles for mother, two hands that can save and protect others. The other day some boys caught a little kitten and tied it to a post and threw stones at it. Just think of it! But along came a boy and he clenched his hands just like this and he

ran at those boys and drove them away and saved the life of the little kitten.

God wants us to use these hands of ours for Him. But so many of us are not tamed. We are wild and careless and not of much use, like wild elephants. But if we are tamed and trained to be useful then God will be well pleased. That is the reason why we are so anxious that boys and girls should come to Sunday-school and to church that, early in life, they may be trained to use their hands in the service of God for others.

Let us one and all give to God our hands.

XV

The Ocean of God's Love

(*Objects: A glass, pitcher of water, piece of thin cardboard or writing-paper large enough to cover top of glass, piece of paper an inch square.*)

WOULD you think it funny if I said that we are all living in an ocean? Well, we are—in a great air-ocean. If there happened to be a person on the planet Mars and if he could see the air as we see water, looking down at us he would see the people here walking around on the bottom of this ocean and he would see birds floating and darting around in it. Then, if he let down a hook and caught one of us and pulled us up out of this ocean to the place where there was no air, say fifty or a hundred miles above the earth, we would act just the way a fish does when we pull him out of water.

The air in this ocean is pressing upon us and, down here on the bottom where we live, the pressure is heaviest. Learned men tell

us that this pressure is fifteen pounds to the square inch. Here is a piece of paper an inch square in shape. The air is pressing upon the top of it and upon the bottom and the sides of it with the force of fifteen pounds. Let me show you just how this is. If I wet it and put it down flat on this board it is very hard for me to pick it up, for there is no air under it and there is a fifteen pound weight pressing down on it. But the air is pressing up also. Here is a tumbler. How shall I get the air out of it? I cannot blow it out, and if I turn the tumbler upside down, the air will not fall out. The best way will be to fill the tumbler with something that will force out the air. Suppose I fill it with water. Now all the air has gone out. Then I am going to put this piece of cardboard over it and turn it upside down. You see the card does not fall off and the water does not flow away because the air is pressing up against the card.

Do you know that we live in another ocean —the ocean of God's love? His love is everywhere, just like the air, filling every nook and cranny of the world. His love is pressing down upon us, telling us to look down at the earth and see how beautiful it is, telling us to do our work faithfully and well,

telling us to be kind and obedient and loving to every one here. God's love does indeed press down on us, for He does not want us to forget our tasks and our duties and the people here. But His love presses upward too. It bids us lift up our eyes and look upon the heavens; it bids us wonder at the work of His fingers, the sun, moon and stars which He made; it bids us think often of Him and it invites us to talk with Him as He walks in the meadows of the night and through the bright fields of the day.

Let us all rejoice this day in the love of God.

XVI

Fool's Gold

(*Objects: A lump of fool's gold, iron pyrites.*)

ONCE upon a time there was a boy who loved to dig in his yard. He played he was a miner and he dug great holes in search of gold and silver. He played too that he was a pirate and he dug caves in which to hide his treasures. One day he found a piece of rock and he saw that there were yellow specks in it. He was much excited for he thought he had found a lump of gold rock and he could hardly wait till father came home. When father came he ran to meet him and cried that now they would all be rich for he had found some gold in the back yard. Father was excited too and he looked at the piece of rock but father was wise and he saw that it was not gold, though it looked like it. He said it was "fool's gold" or an iron rock that had only some cheap yellow metal in it. He said to his little boy who was quite disappointed: "Johnny, you must remember that all that glitters is not gold."

Last week I heard a little girl say: "Oh, mother, I want some of that cake." But mother said: "No, you cannot have any of it for it is too rich." "Oh, but I want some!" said the little girl and cried. I heard a little boy say that he wanted a sharp knife but father would not give it to him, for he was a very little boy and he might cut himself dreadfully with it. The little boy however thought father was cross and mean and he cried so much that father had to punish him. Then some one told me of a girl who wanted to go to a theatre, for there were lots of beautifully colored pictures in front of it, but mother would not let her go for many reasons, yet that little girl cried as though her heart would break and thought mother was horrid.

What was the trouble? All these things looked very nice; the cake was white with pink letters on it, the knife was bright and beautiful, the theatre was so big and many people were going in, but father and mother knew best. These things glittered but they were not gold.

I hope that we will not forget this story of the fool's gold and I hope that we will remember that father and mother know best.

XVII

Arrow-Heads

(*Objects: Some flint arrow-heads and a Bible.*)

YEARS ago, before guns were invented, the Indians used to fight with arrows. They made arrow-heads out of flint and tied them to a stick of wood and put feathers in the end to make it go straight and then shot the arrow from a bow. In many parts of the United States we can find arrow-heads like these. They have even been picked up here.

It is hard for us to find these arrows that were used for fighting and killing but we can see other arrows every day of our lives. We cannot pick them up for they are painted on signs and they point the way to some place. We see a sign-post with an arrow painted on it and the words "Subway" or "Grand Central Station" and we know if we go in that direction we will reach the subway or the station.

We see arrow-heads on the badges of the Boy Scouts too, don't we? These boys never

fight but instead they spend their time in helping others and in doing good deeds every day. The Scouts point out good paths in which we should all go.

But there is an arrow to be found in nearly every house and in every country in the world. It is a book and we call it the Bible. It points out the way and it points in only one direction. Many of the arrows we see point north, east, south and west but this arrow points straight upward. It points upward to God.

We can generally trust the arrows we see on sign-posts but not always, for some mischievous boys may twist them around and instead of going to the subway we may find ourselves by and by in front of the Zoo. But we can always trust the Bible. No one can twist or destroy the great truths and teachings it contains. If we but follow in the direction it points, we shall find God, we shall come to know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Master, we shall be made wonderfully happy and we shall find a peace that passeth understanding and a joy that knows no end.

XVIII

The Power of Little Faults

(*Object: A spool of black thread.*)

HOW many children there are who have little faults! Some tell naughty tales, some have bad tempers, some are cry-babies, some are very selfish. All these faults had a beginning. There was a time when the fault first showed itself in their lives. Then it happened again and then again. By and by after they had kept on repeating that fault it became a habit, a bad habit. Let me try and show you just what happened.

Here is a spool of black thread. Suppose I wrap the thread once around my hand. It is easy for me to break it, isn't it? Suppose I wrap it around my hand twice. It is still easy to break. Suppose I wrap it around six times. It is a little harder to break. But suppose I wrap it around, let us say, two or three dozen times. Then it becomes awfully hard to break and perhaps I can't snap it at all. The only way then to

get it off my hand is to have some one come and cut it away with a knife or scissors.

The little fault that fastened itself upon us was just like that thread. At first it was not at all strong and we could have broken it easily. The second time we would not have had much trouble to break it, but if that fault was allowed to grow stronger and stronger and to fasten itself about us more and more, before long it would be awfully hard to break. We would be in its power, in the power of a bad habit.

A boy once wrapped around himself the black threads of the habit of stealing. The first thread was the stealing of a jar of jam from the cupboard; the second, a bunch of bananas when the banana man at the corner wasn't looking; the third, some money from mother's purse; the fourth, a baseball bat when the manager of the big team wasn't around, and then came a hundred other threads, and at last the robbery of a bank. Now the boy is called a thief and he is the prisoner of an evil habit and the prisoner of men in a jail.

The reason why we want you to come to Sunday-school and to church is that we wish to help you undo the little threads of faults that have fastened themselves around you.

In spite of all we do, they will fasten themselves about us and we must be continually on the lookout, ready to snap them at once. Aren't you glad that you don't have to break those threads all by yourself? There are many persons and things that want to help you. Father and mother want to help, your pastor and Sunday-school teacher are very anxious to help, all the good people in the church, all your true friends, all those who are sorry to see that little fault about you, want to help. The Lord Jesus wants to help. The Bible tells us that He came to set people free from the chains and the strong threads that were wrapped around them. "Come unto Me," He said, "all ye who are heavy laden and I will you rest." That is, He wants those whose hearts are weighed down with sorrow because of evil habits and the wrong things they have done because of them, to come to Him and He will give them rest by taking away the burden.

XIX

Paper Cups

(*Objects: Waxed paper drinking cup, piece of soft paper.*)

THE other day while travelling on a train I saw person after person walk up the aisle to get a drink of water. I wonder what they drank out of? There was no glass under the cooler because a law was passed forbidding railroads to have one there. Why was this done, do you suppose? Because many people have colds or a sore throat and if they drank out of the glass and other people came along and drank after them, these people might catch the cold or the sore throat. But there was something there to drink from. I saw these people reach up and take out of a little rack a drinking cup made of paper like this. After the person had used it he threw the cup away so that every one had a fresh cup to use.

Do you know what these paper cups are made of? Once the cup was a piece of soft paper like this. But paper like this would

not do, for as soon as water touched it it became soft and flabby. The people in the factory took this paper and covered it with wax and made it stiff and strong. Then the water could not soak it and it made a splendid drinking cup. The soft paper had been made useful now.

It seems to me that the Lord Jesus does just this same thing to people. He takes a boy or a girl, a man or a woman who may be rather weak and flabby and not of much use in the world and He makes them strong and useful. We call such a person a Christian and a Christian is one who is of great use in the world trying to do things for God and seeking to help others. Christians are like these little cups, filled with clear cold water, refreshing and helping others. We want boys and girls to come to Sunday-school and to church that we may make you useful cups. We try to teach you many wonderful things about God and the Lord Jesus and we urge you to be good and kind and helpful so that you can do many things for Him in the great wide world. I hope you will remember that you are little cups bearing good things to every one.

XX

Standing Upright

(*Object: A little tumbling doll, one that has weight in the base that enables it to right itself when rolled over.*)

IN our homes I know we have lead soldiers or animals in a Noah's ark or dolls and we are greatly troubled by them at times because they will not stand up straight. Perhaps we have in our home a little baby brother. He crawls everywhere and rolls and tumbles about but by and by he stands upright and then he is a little baby no longer but has become a little man and we are all glad to see him standing up straight and true.

That word "upright" is a splendid word. When we wish to say that a boy or man is honest and straightforward and good and true, we say he is upright. Those who are dishonest and mean and selfish and who do evil things, we say have lives that are bent and twisted and crooked. I know we have all felt sorry for that little crooked man in Mother Goose who lived in a little crooked

house in a crooked lane with a crooked cat. We are sorry to see any one whose life is crooked and we are glad to see those who walk uprightly.

Here is a little doll. You can roll it over or put it on its side but right away it stands upright. It bobs up with a smile and will only stand in one position straight and true. I wonder why this is so? Because there is something strong that makes it stand upright. There is a bit of lead right here.

You and I can stand up straight and walk around because there are strong muscles in the calves of our legs and in our thighs that keep us from falling down. You and I can be honest and straightforward and good and true if something will strengthen our lives. Strength will be given us to walk uprightly if we depend on Jesus Christ. He will teach us how to be kind and truthful and obedient and pure and gentle. Depending on Him we shall not be moved.

Let me give you a verse to remember: "No good thing will the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly." All the good, bright and beautiful things of life will be given us if we walk uprightly. Our lives will be made happy and others will be filled with joy. It is worth while to stand upright!

XXI

Eyes for Others

(*Objects: A pair of spectacles, pair of black spectacles, pair of spectacles with the glass out.*)

YOU have heard grandmother or mother say: "Please get me my eyes." Then you hurry off and find a pair of spectacles somewhere and bring them to her. These spectacles help poor tired eyes to see clearly.

The other day I read of a man in the Bible who acted as a pair of glasses or spectacles for people. Wasn't that funny! Years and years ago, away across the sea, Moses and a great number of people were wandering around in a desert. Everywhere they looked they could see nothing but sand. The sun was very hot and they were tired and did not know where to go. There were no roads or paths and they were afraid they had lost their way and could not reach the Promised Land, a beautiful country they were seeking. But at last a man came along who knew the desert

and Moses said: "Don't leave us—YOU MUST BE FOR US INSTEAD OF EYES." That is, Moses wanted him to go with them and lead them and find the path that led into the Promised Land. And the man, whose name was Hobab, did this.

We can be eyes for people. Mother says: "Helen, I have dropped my thimble; won't you see if you can find it for me?" Then just as though mother put on bright, clear spectacles, Helen hurries here and there and at last finds the thimble. Many a time father says to us: "See if you can't help mother to-day. She has lots of things to do, see if you can look about the house and help her by picking things up and by running errands for her. Be mother's eyes to-day."

But suppose we pout and are disagreeable and disobedient and answer back and say: "No, I don't want to." Suppose all day we go around and do not help mother and do not see things which we might do for her. Then we are poor eyes. It is just as though our eyes were black. (Put on black glasses.) I can't see clearly with these glasses. I can't see to read or to pick things up. I can't be of much use if I have these glasses on. We can't be of much help to others if we are black eyes.

Suppose we are selfish and want to please ourselves all the time. Suppose we run off and play and do not help at all. Why, then we are not eyes at all. (Put on spectacles without glass.) It is just as though we were like these spectacles—just rims with no clear, bright glass in them.

But the kind of eyes we must be are like these perfect shining spectacles. We must be bright and beautiful. We must see clearly to help others. We must be eyes for people and try to see what we can do for them.

If our lives are bright and beautiful within, then our eyes will be clear and shining. But if we are all dark and dismal and mean within, then our eyes will be black. And the way to be bright and beautiful within is to love Jesus, and try to follow Him.

XXII

Safety Matches

(*Object: Box of safety matches.*)

HERE is a box of matches. What kind are they? Safety matches. I wonder why they have this name? Well, they are perfectly safe to leave around. Little children can't set them off very well, mice can gnaw at them but they won't light, they can fall on the floor and we can step on them without their catching fire. The only way to light them is to strike them on the box. There are two little fairies called chemicals here. One is on the match head and the other, mixed with fine sand, is on the side of the box. If we look at the match we might think it would burst into light anywhere for it seems quite perfect, but it won't. To make it light we must let one fairy meet the other little fairy and then light is made. (Show this.)

It struck me that people are much like these matches. They may seem to be all right, they may look quite perfect and you

would think they would give off light, you would think their lives would be bright and shining. But they are not. Why? Because their lives do not touch God. What we all need in life is GOD. If we bring our lives close to Him, if we touch Him, then LIGHT is made, our lives catch fire and become bright and shining.

How do we touch God? By talking with Him, by thinking about Him, by trying our best each day to work for Him and to do His will.

There is a verse in the Bible which declares that this fact about God is true. It is found in the fifteenth chapter of John and the fifth verse. It says: "Without Me ye can do nothing." Kept apart from God, separated from Him, we can do nothing, our lives cannot shine.

XXIII

Spoons

(*Objects: Different kinds of spoons: souvenir, birthday, kitchen, baby, jam, sugar, coffee, pickle, teaspoons.*)

WE have often wondered, I guess, at the many different kinds of people in the world but though they are quite unlike each other yet we know they are not trees or houses or animals; there is something about them all that tells us they are people. There are many different kinds of Christians here to-day. Some are very tall and some quite little, some are stout and others are thin, some are wise and others do not know very much as yet. But if we are real true Christians we ought to look much alike. Other people looking at us ought to be able to say: "There goes a person who is a Christian."

It seems to me we are all something like SPOONS. Here is a great long spoon and here are some middle sized spoons and here are some tiny spoons, yet though they differ

greatly from each other, we know they are spoons and not knives or forks. So with Christians. We ought to look something like the One whose name we bear. We ought to resemble Jesus Christ our Master for, doing His will and following Him, we do indeed grow to look like Him and like each other.

Then too we ought to speak very much alike. Spoons speak. Indeed they do! Here are some souvenir spoons. We look at this one and our thoughts go back to a day we spent in the White Mountains and the spoon speaks to us of that wonderful day. Here is another and it speaks to us of Rome and of all the marvellous things we saw there. Here are some birthday spoons. One tells us of a day when a little boy was born, another of the day when we were five years old, another speaks to us of grandpa who gave that spoon to us. All Christians ought to be able to speak of the great places in life where God was such a help to them, of the deserts of trouble where God comforted them, of the valleys of temptation where God strengthened them, of the marshes of sin out of which God pulled them, of the steep and narrow path in which God held them firm and steady. Christians

ought to be able to tell of wonderful times: of the Sundays and Christmas and Easter days when we came very near our Master, of the time when we stood up before the world and declared we would follow Christ to the end, of the times of prayer and the reading of God's Word when great joy filled our souls. Christians ought to be able to tell of people who helped them so much: of father and mother, of their pastor and Sunday-school teacher, of friends and loved ones, all of whom made life bright and glad.

There is just one more thing about spoons and about Christians too. All spoons are for USE, but not the same kind of use. Some are pickle spoons, doing their work in sour acid places; some are jam and sugar spoons, working among sweet things; others are humble kitchen spoons and some are plain ordinary teaspoons and some are golden spoons used only on best occasions. All Christians must be of USE in the world. God has given unto us work to do. It may be hard disagreeable work, it may be humble work or work in most pleasant places. But wherever it is, we must do our best and serve God there.

XXIV

The Man Whose Face Shone

(*Object: A post-card of a scene in a city, the windows of the houses, the street lights, the moon and stars being transparent bits of colored paper, a candle and matches.*)

WE have all seen stained glass windows. We can find them in many beautiful churches. I wonder if you have noticed a curious thing about them. If we go into a church at night or on a very dark day we cannot see the colors at all. A light must be back of the windows shining through them before the beautiful colors will appear.

There was once a man named Stephen whose life resembled a stained glass window. There were beautiful colors within him but somehow nobody saw them because there was no light in his life shining through him. But one day he met a wonderful man and his whole life was changed. How he loved that man! He tried to follow His example in everything and he became kind and good and patient. I wonder if you can

guess who the wonderful man was? He was the Lord Jesus. Everywhere this changed man went people knew that he had met Jesus because a light shone in his face. At last cruel men caught him and put him to death. But even then though he was suffering in agony, the people, looking at him, saw that the light within him had become brighter than ever and they saw that his face shone as though it had been the face of an angel.

Here is a picture that will show you what I mean. You can see a hotel and a street and a bridge but no colors. Now let me light a candle and hold the candle behind it. Now see the colored lights in the hotel, the street lamps, the stars and the moon. It makes a big difference, doesn't it, if there is a light back of it?

Once this world of ours was very dark but at last a great light shone in it. Jesus came and said: "I am the light of the world," and then the whole earth became beautiful with love, joy and peace. It will make the greatest difference if there is a light shining in us. We have but to take Jesus into our lives and let Him shine through us. Many beautiful things will then appear and people will see from our shining faces that we have indeed been with Jesus.

XXV

The Fish With the Open Mouth

(*Object: A china fish with a large open mouth, used as a flower holder.*)

I KNOW you will laugh when you see this fish, for he is a very funny-looking fellow. This kind of a fish lives on the bottom of the sea with his mouth open all the time. Most fish keep their mouths closed and only open them when they wish to swallow some food, but this fish never closes his. I really believe he goes to sleep with that big mouth open. I feel sorry for this fish. He must get a lot of food by keeping his mouth open or else he wouldn't act this way, but just think of the bits of sand and seaweed and little shells that must drift into his mouth. And by and by, if he is not very careful, he will swallow a hook and then he will be caught!

There are lots of people in the world who go round with their mouths open nearly all the time. This is bad for their throats and very hard on other people. There are even

little children who have their mouths open most all the time. People call them chatterboxes and they are really quite a nuisance. I wonder if mother has ever said to you: "Little children are better seen and not heard"? People like to hear us talk if we say sensible and pleasant things but if we say foolish things and talk a great deal of nonsense then people get oh so tired of us. The Bible often advises us that we should cease from vain and foolish talking.

What letter does this fish seem to be saying? The letter O. The most foolish and senseless talking in the world begins with the letter O. We call this kind of talking gossip. People say: "Oh, I have something very choice to tell you, you mustn't tell it, for it is a deep secret. I heard it about so and so." And the other person says: "Oh, do tell me!" and by and by that person says: "Oh, I wouldn't have believed it possible." And the other person whispers: "Oh, but it's true." Then some one else says: "Oh, I have something to tell you"—and so on it goes. It is a dreadful and unchristian thing to keep our mouths open, ready to say mean and disagreeable things about others.

A wise man, called a poet, once gave this advice about speaking of others:

"If you are tempted to reveal
A tale some one has told
About another: make it pass,
Before you speak, three gates of gold.

"These narrow gates: First, 'Is it true?'
Then, 'Is it needful?' In your mind
Give truthful answer. And the next
Is last and narrowed, 'Is it kind?'

"And if to reach your lips at last
It passes through these gateways three,
Then you may tell the tale, nor fear
What the result of speech may be."

But no one can reproach us if we open our mouths and talk continually about one beautiful thing. I want you to remember this verse in the Bible. "Open thou my lips and my mouth shall shew forth Thy praise." What a wonderful thing to show forth the praise of God, to tell of His loving kindness, of His tender mercy and of His marvellous goodness to the children of men!

XXVI

Stored-Up Sunshine

(*Objects: A piece of amber, an amber pipe-stem will do; a piece of silk and some fine bits of tissue paper.*)

I WONDER if you know what amber is? Very often we see necklaces and beads of amber and also pipe-stems. Amber is stored up sunshine. Isn't that interesting?

I wonder if you can imagine what this earth looked like, oh, more than a million years ago? The sun shone down on a very queer-looking world then. There was no ice or snow, for the world was just a beautiful mass of green. It was like a great hothouse, damp and hot. No trees like ours were growing then but there were giant ferns a hundred feet high and marvellous club mosses that reached up into the sky seventy-five feet. The sun shone down warmly and the ferns and mosses were very greedy and drank in all the sunshine they could and grew and grew, storing up the sunshine in themselves. If we had looked closely we would have seen

on some of those trees a sticky sap or resin something like the resin on pine and cherry trees. By and by there came some awful earthquakes and the earth was thrown up miles high forming mountains, and great valleys were hollowed out into which water flowed and formed our oceans. What do you suppose became of the giant ferns and mosses? They were buried beneath the rocks and earth. There they stayed covered up for more years than we could possibly count. But by and by some men came upon the earth and once, walking along the shores of the Baltic Sea, they found some little golden things that looked like stone. The English people called it amber. It was that sticky sap that had oozed out of the trees. When the ferns had all been covered up, the amber slowly hardened and it lay for many years under the Baltic Sea. Now and then great storms would wash some of it out and that is the way men happened to find it.

Here is a piece from a pipe. We like it because it is so golden and sunny. Just think of it—it lay under that dark ground and under the sea all those years and never lost its sunshiny look! I wonder if WE could be like amber—just sunshiny; I wonder if we could store up sunshine and give it out in

smiles and laughter and cheery words? If we do this we will always attract people to us.

Isn't it interesting that amber attracts? The old Greeks found this out and called amber electron and from this word we get our word electricity. The Greeks found out there was electrical power in amber. (Rub piece with silk and have it pick up pieces of tissue paper.)

Jesus was always happy and sunshiny. Everywhere He went He attracted people and they loved Him. We must try never to lose our smile or be disagreeable for then people will run away from us. But if we store up all the sunshiny happy things we meet with and then give out the sunshine, people will love us, and be made happy themselves.

XXVII

The Armor of Light

(*Object: An oil lantern.*)

THE great Apostle Paul speaks in one of his letters about the armor of light. "Let us put on the armor of light," he says. I stopped to wonder what these words meant. That evening I happened to go out-of-doors with a candle and since the wind was blowing, it went out at once. I saw then that light does need armor. So I went indoors and lit an oil lantern like this and then, though the wind blew very hard, the light did not go out.

Armor you know is not used to fight with but to protect people from injury. Years ago the great knights used to wear whole suits of armor and to-day we put heavy plates of steel on war vessels and we call them armored cruisers and battle-ships.

Paul tells us that it is necessary that Christians should have armor to protect them from injury if they would be useful in the world and if they would keep their light shining

bright and clear. Perhaps this oil lantern can teach us several things that Paul says we need.

First of all, the lantern must have a strong foundation. You see how broad and how strong the bottom of the lantern is. This keeps it from falling over and breaking. Paul says, and his words are true, that we must build our lives on one foundation, upon Jesus Christ and no other. Then the lantern must be filled with oil which enables it to burn steadily. The Christian draws his strength from God who is like a mighty reservoir sending down power and so enabling us to keep the light of our lives burning steadily and true. From time to time the wick of the lantern must be trimmed and cleansed from dust and grit, just as we must trim away and cleanse our lives from all the evil things which try to make our light grow dim and burn unevenly.

Around the light the lantern must have a globe, not a black one, for then the light would not shine through, but a clear strong globe of glass. Paul tells us that the armor of the Christian is a clear shining armor made up of three things : truth, goodness and faith. We all know what truth is. Often we say that a person's life rings true and we

mean that he is sincere, honest and straightforward, that he is faithful and loyal, that he would scorn to do anything unjust or dishonorable. We all know what goodness is. It is made up of purity and right conduct and loving kindness. And we all know what is meant by faith, I am sure.

This is the armor of light and if we protect ourselves with it, the light of our lives will be a rich warm golden light. This light will never go out but will shine forever and ever, and as it shines it will bring gladness, joy and comfort into the dark places of the world.

XXVIII

Forming Good Habits

(*Objects: A glass of plaster of paris powder; a ball of it in plastic form; a ball of it hard.*)

DO we know how paths were made across the meadows or through the woods? Once upon a time a man, or perhaps a cow, walked along brushing the weeds aside and treading down the grass and soft earth. By and by another cow or man came along and followed where the first had gone and then came another and another. After a long time the path had become quite hard, for all the grass had been worn away. We are making paths like that in our lives, only we call them habits. We do a certain thing once and perhaps it is hard to do but we do it again and it is easier and then again and again. At last after a long time the path has become so packed down and hardened that it is no trouble to walk along it. We have formed a hard and fast habit for ourselves.

Perhaps I can make this plain by showing

you this white powder. It is soft but if I add some water to it and let some time pass, I can make all the particles stick together and so it becomes stiff. But still it is easily bent and not hard yet. But if I let more time pass, it becomes quite hard.

We can take our feet or our hands or our mouths or our thoughts or our whole bodies and form habits for them. All we have to do is to add a thing called WILL which makes them go in certain directions and then let them go that way again and again and after time has passed we find that a hard and fast habit has been formed.

It is possible for us to form good habits and bad habits but I do not want to speak of any bad habits to-day. I want to tell you of two splendid habits that the Lord Jesus had, for He formed habits just as we do. The first one was a habit of the feet and the second a habit of the hands.

On every Sabbath morning, so we read, He went to church as was His custom or habit. Once He walked to church and then again and again and at last it was the most natural thing in the world for His feet to start off for church on Sunday morning. I wonder if we cannot let our feet get this same habit? It may be a bit hard at first but it will get

easier all the time and at last when we have formed the churchgoing habit we shall find it is a splendid and beautiful one.

Again and again in the gospel story we read that Jesus stretched out His hands and blessed and helped people. What a splendid habit to form—the habit of helping! It may be hard at first—our hands naturally want to get things and keep things and give things to ourselves, but if we stretch out our hands to others as did Jesus, we shall find a wonderful habit growing up—the habit of helping and lending a hand.

XXIX

If the Soul Tumbles

(*Objects: An inexpensive white vase or a white cup; place a flat stone on the platform concealed behind something, as a vase of flowers.*)

WE have all had tumbles. Sometimes when we have fallen down we have only bruised ourselves but if we have fallen from any high place, we have no doubt broken something. Some of us have tumbled off the porch and broken an arm, or fallen out of an apple tree and broken a leg. Tumbles are indeed dangerous because our bones are quite brittle and easily snapped.

There is a wonderful thing within us which we call a soul and it can take a tumble. Sometimes it is only bruised and shaken up badly but if it falls down hard it may be broken, for it is quite delicate and tender. I have here a cup which is white and quite perfectly made, but we must take care to handle it gently or else it will break. Our soul is something like this cup and we must guard it with great care lest it take a tumble.

I heard about a boy the other day who was a fine, manly little fellow. Father and mother were proud of him and believed he would grow up to be a splendid man. They tried their best to teach him how to be good and true, and urged him to do always that which was right. But one day he fell in with a crowd of bad boys, and day after day he went with them and his soul took a tumble. These boys used to say bad words, and before long he was saying them too. They used to smoke cigarettes down behind the barn; they stole things from the neighbors such as hatchets and chickens and watermelons; they were cruel to cats and dogs; they bullied the other children in the neighborhood and took things from them; they put tacks in the road in front of automobiles; they rang fire alarms to see the engines come; they did all manner of evil things and this boy copied them. Of course it was not long before father and mother found it out and they were greatly worried. Father was a wise man, and when one day he found all the boys together, he took a cup with him like this and talked with them about the soul. He told them how anxious he was that his boy should grow up to be good and true, and how, since he had gone with them, he had been entirely dif-

ferent. "Boys," he said, "the soul of my boy has taken a tumble and it has been greatly harmed by you and the wrong things you have taught him. It is just like this." And he let the cup drop (drop the cup on the stone) and it shattered into a dozen pieces. The boys jumped and were much astonished. Then the father told them that he was going to try and put the pieces together and make that soul whole again but he wanted their help. And the boys promised and went home quietly thinking over all they had heard and seen.

I can pick up these pieces and glue them together but the cup will never be quite the same. It will always have in it the lines and marks where it has been pieced together. It is possible to put the soul together if it has taken a tumble, but it will never be quite the same, for evil always leaves dreadful marks behind.

We must be careful, therefore, to keep the soul from a tumble. Every time we pray the Lord's Prayer and say these words: "Deliver us from evil," we pray that the soul may be kept from a fall. God will help us. He will keep us from stumbling and preserve our souls from harm and our eyes from tears.

XXX

The Fairy and the Axes

(*Object: The household axe or hatchet.*)

THERE is a verse in the Bible that I want you to think about. It is this: "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." This verse speaks of the awfulness of telling a naughty tale and of how God dislikes it.

I have here an axe. It belongs in my house and I know it is mine. It is rather old and rusty looking, isn't it, and, I am sorry to say, has some nicks in the blade which came from chopping wood with nails in it. But suppose I should lose this axe and advertise for it and you should come bringing a fine new axe and say that you had found it and ask me if it was mine. Suppose I should look at that axe carefully and see how much better it was than mine and should say, "Yes," I would be telling an untruth, and you would not think much of me, would you?

Once upon a time something like that happened to a man who was chopping wood by the side of a river. He was a poor man and lived in a house that had holes in the roof. His clothes were torn and ragged and his children were quite hungry all the time. To make some money he used to take his old worn axe and chop wood and sell it. One day as he chopped, suddenly the axe flew from his hands and fell with a splash in the river. How sorry the man was! He did not have money enough to buy a new one and the water was too deep to find the old one, so he just sat down and cried. But all of a sudden a fairy rose up out of the river with a beautiful golden axe in her hand and asked him if it was his. The man was so astonished he did not know what to do. He looked at the axe, and how he wanted it! He thought of all the money it would bring if he sold it and of how many nice things he could buy for himself and his children. But he was an honest man, so he shook his head and said no, it wasn't his. Then the fairy disappeared but came back soon again with a silver axe which had diamonds set in the handle. She asked him if this one was his and how the man longed to say it was, but he could not tell an untruth so he said, No. She disap-

peared again and shortly after came up from the water bringing his old axe. "Yes, that's mine!" cried the man and took it from her hand. The fairy was so pleased with him that she gave him the other two for telling the truth.

I hope that we will always be careful to tell the truth. We would not want any one around our house who told naughty tales for we could not trust them and we would not know what they might do next. It will pay to tell the truth because people will trust us, and God will be pleased. But we must tell the truth because it is right in itself to do so and because only the things that are right satisfy God.

XXXI

Little Lights of God

(*Objects: Matches, big candle, twelve candles arranged in a circle on a table, two or three candles near them, candle beneath glass wrapped in black cloth, candle in a Japanese lantern, little candle in a corner.*)

THE Bible tells us of a wonderful thing that happened once upon a time. A number of men were sitting in a room and suddenly the glory of God filled the room. They felt that God was close to each one of them and they were glad. Looking at each other they saw that every person's face shone and it seemed as though every one was afire with light from God. Twelve important men were there, men who loved God devotedly and I think I can explain to you what happened. God is light, we are told, and God sent down light to them. Here are these twelve men. Then down came this wonderful light from God. (Light big candle and light each of the twelve.) Each man's life caught fire and

burned brightly. Each man went out to serve God and to tell others of Him. They passed the light which they had to others and so on down through the centuries this light came (light several of the other candles from one of the twelve) even till these days and to-day we find men and women whose lives are bright and beautiful because they received this light.

Here is a man in Japan across the sea. He was a humble fisherman but one of these lights came and told him of God and he caught fire and to-day he is burning there in far-off Japan for God. (Light candle in lantern from one of the candles.)

Here is something quite sad. There is a candle under this black glass, a life that ought to be lit but over it is the dark covering of sin. It is quite impossible to light that life till the covering of sin has been removed. (Show this.)

Here is another thing quite sad. This little candle lying on its side is a "don't care candle." When I try to light it, it rolls here and there; it rolls away from the light; it won't let itself catch fire and it stays dark and useless. There are don't care people in the world who won't let God light them but who turn constantly from Him.

I almost forgot something. Perhaps some little children here are saying: "God cannot pass big people by. He can see them but I am so tiny that He will pass me by." But God does not forget any of us no matter how big or how small we are. He will light every life if we let Him. Perhaps a little boy or girl will say: "Oh, well, suppose God does light my life. I am so small that my light won't do much good." But just look at this corner. It is quite dark, isn't it, but right here is a tiny candle. I am going to light it and there, you see how it makes the corner bright. That little light is shining bravely there all by itself and doing much good.

All that we have to do, big or little, is to let God light our lives and then shine in our little corner of the world, you in your little corner, and I in mine.

XXXII

How the Bible Helps

(*Objects: A bottle with a screw top—a Mason jar or an Imperial Granum bottle is just the thing—one-half full of water; a pitcher one-half full of water into which a few drops of tincture of iron and a pinch of powdered nut galls have been added. This makes a black liquid. Inside of the screw top of the bottle, so it cannot be seen, have a piece of cotton fastened, well soaked with oxalic acid; piece of printed page, a nickel, a flower.*)

THERE was once a boy who had a dear sweet mother, and he used to kneel down by her side and say his prayers each night and so grew up to be a manly little fellow. But when he became older he met some bad boys and they taught him many wrong and dreadful things. He began to do things that were not nice, things that made his mother cry. By and by he told lies and then began to steal. His life, that was once so white like the water in this bottle, began to be darkened.

Sin entered his life and blackened it. (Pour a little of the black water in.) He thought it was big to swear and to smoke cigarettes and to drink what the other boys called liquor. He seemed to do more evil things each day. His life was becoming darkened more and more. (Pour in more water.) His father and mother thought education would help him. (Put in piece of printed page in bottle.) But the education did not clear up his darkened life. They thought money would help. (Put in nickel.) But it didn't, though they bought him many splendid things and made him travel. They thought the beautiful things of life, such as art and music and flowers, would help. (Put in flower.) But they did no good.

At last he committed a crime and was put in prison. There some one gave him a Bible. He had always had a Bible which he had neglected in his later life but now, when everything was so black, he turned to this Bible for help. He read there about the poor boy who ran away from home and did wrong, just as he had done, and yet was forgiven by his father when he repented and ran back to him. He knelt down by his cot in the prison and laid his head on the open Bible (place the top on the bottle,

screw it down tight, then place it on its side in an open Bible and close the Bible over it and leave it there for a few seconds; shake it as you put it in) and he cried as though his heart would break and he prayed to God and asked Him to forgive him and to blot out his sins and let him live a new clean life again. And God answered his prayer. He rose from his cot and he felt as though a heavy load had been lifted from him, as though the burden of his darkened life had been rolled away. He became a new man from that moment because in the Bible he had found the good news of God's forgiveness and love, because in the Bible he had found a Saviour and a Master. (Take the bottle out—the water will be white.)

There was great happiness in the hearts of his father and mother and even the angels in heaven rejoiced with great joy because this poor darkened life had become white and clean again.

XXXIII

Prayers

(*Objects: Some fragrant pastilles purchased from any druggist, a bowl and matches.*)

THERE is a beautiful picture in the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation. God is seated on a great white throne with a wonderful host of white robed saints all around Him as far as the eye can reach. Before Him are twenty-four dear old men called elders, each having a harp and a golden bowl. These bowls are filled with incense and we are told they contain the prayers of people. As the prayers of people come floating up, the dear old men catch them in the bowls and bring them to God. This incense is a fragrant herb that used to be burned in temples and cathedrals and even is to-day. The writer of the book of Revelation thought of prayers going up into the sky like the smoke of this incense.

I wonder if we can see how this is. (Light several of the pastilles.) Here is the prayer

of an old man that rises faint and trembling to God; here is the prayer of a person in trouble rising straight and fast to God; here is the prayer of a poor person sobbing and crying in grief; here is the prayer said by a little child as he goes to bed. You know that last prayer: "Now I lay me down to sleep" or perhaps it is "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me." So up they go, the prayers of the big and the little, the prayers of the troubled and the glad, the prayers of the good and the bad—and not one of them is lost on the way. This smoke does not go downward or off to one side but straight up. And the prayers go straight to God.

Suppose I put all these prayers together in this bowl. Now we have a strong body of smoke. All the prayers are mingled and the smoke goes up in one cloud. We might call that bowl the CHURCH. In the church the prayers mingle and go up to God. In the church we work together side by side, we sing together, we pray together.

So to-day let us think of our prayers going up to God. Every prayer goes to Him when we pray, and not a single one of them is lost.

XXXIV

Shaking People Up

(*Objects: Four bottles, each half filled with water. In one, place some sand or earth and let it stand till the sand settles at the bottom with clear water above; to the cork of another tie a piece of cotton dipped in red ink, wrap paper or a ribbon about the neck to conceal this; in another, place a few drops of tincture of iron; let the fourth contain clear water; powdered nut galls.*)

IT is very strange what happens when people are shaken up. Their lives may seem to be bright and beautiful but let something happen that shakes them up and then we see what they really are.

I wonder if we have ever heard the word "hypocrite." We find it often in the Bible and Jesus grew very angry with people who were hypocrites. A hypocrite is a pretender, a make-believe person. Perhaps you know a little girl who wears pretty clothes and hats and who is quite nice to people she likes. To look at her you would think she is a sweet, nice girl. But "pretty is as pretty does"—and really

she is nothing but a little hypocrite, for she is mean, selfish and disagreeable and at home she pouts, answers back and is unkind to every one. Perhaps you know people who come to church on Sunday and look very holy and good but during the week they do most unholy things. A hypocrite is something like this bottle of water. You see it is quite clear and white on top but there is mud at the bottom. Now just shake him up and see what happens. The clear water becomes cloudy and we see him as he is.

Perhaps you know a boy who has a bad temper. At times he is like a little cherub, so sweet and lovely, but shake him up and see what happens. Just get his temper aroused, just let him get mad, as we say. Suppose we shake this bottle up, this bottle with calm clear water. There, it has all turned red. And when any one gets mad, their whole nature just turns red. It is a dreadful thing not to control one's temper, to allow oneself to be shaken up into a rage, for then many times we do not know what we are doing. Boys have thrown stones at another boy and cut his face so that the boy has been disfigured for life. Girls have pushed another girl in anger so that she has broken an arm.

Do you know what happens when sin enters a life? IT BLACKENS EVERYTHING. I am going to drop this pinch of brown powder into this bottle of clear water (containing the tincture of iron). It is only a little bit and quite harmless looking. Sin often seems a tiny thing and does not look very harmful. But see what happens. It goes into a life and shakes the person up and blackens everything. That person is not pleasant to look upon. His life is saddened and sorrow is brought to many other people.

But here is a calm clear good Christian life. Suppose we let this bottle of clear water represent such a life. We shake it up but it remains the same. There is no trace of a hypocrite here, no dreadful unrighteous anger, no awful black sin. But perhaps sin will get into that life. It will not, if we keep it covered. If I put a cover over it, such as this cork or a piece of paper, sin can fall upon it but it cannot get in. (Drop some nut galls on it.)

Let me tell you the best cover to keep sin out. There is a Bible verse which says: "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." If we put the spirit of Jesus on our lives, just as we put a suit of armor on our bodies, the arrows of sin can do no harm.

XXXV

Clocks

(*Objects: An alarm clock, a small brass clock.*)

IN our homes we have a number of different clocks. Some hang on the wall, some stand on the mantelpiece, some are cuckoo clocks and some are great-grandfather clocks. Inside of them are wheels, and bolts and screws and springs. In some there is a big pendulum which swings slowly to and fro, and in others a fine spring which ticks away merrily and so makes the clock go.

People are a great deal like clocks. They are made of many parts, all wonderfully put together, and have a strange little machine in them, which we call the heart, that beats away and makes their lives go. People have hands and a face too, just like clocks, and some of them are big and many are small.

It would be much nicer to-day to think about the little clocks than the big ones, so I have brought two little clocks to show you. One is a plain old battered one and the other is a beautiful golden clock. Which

one would you take if you had your choice? The gold one, I am sure, for it seems to be the best. But this is not true. Though it seems to be beautiful it runs very queerly. It runs too fast for a while and then too slow; it gets out of order and has to be sent to the store to be fixed. No one can depend upon it. But this old battered clock, which we call an alarm clock, is most useful and every one trusts it. It never loses a minute, but runs steadily day after day. It keeps careful watch all night long, and when it is time to get us up to catch a train or to go fishing, it rings a bell and wakes us.

I wonder if you ever met a boy who had a clean face and who wore beautiful clothes, or a girl who had silver buckles on her shoes and pink ribbons in her hair and who wore a nicely starched white dress and carried a parasol? I wonder if you thought you would find them nice children, as nice as they looked? And I wonder if you were mistaken? I have seen boys and girls like that, and instead of finding them nice I have found the boy to be mean and disagreeable and the girl to be very selfish, a tattle-tale and not at all truthful. Their fine clothes did not make them nice inside. You know there is an old saying, "Fine feathers do not make fine

birds," and perhaps you have heard mother say: "Pretty is as pretty does." But I have also met boys and girls, and I know you have too, who did not have nice clothes, who had soiled faces and grimy hands, but who were kind and good and truthful and obedient and helpful to others. They were just as dependable and useful as that poor looking alarm clock.

Very often the trouble with a nice-looking clock, that does not run smoothly, is that dust and grit gets into the works and stops the wheels and the springs from going round. The trouble with nice-looking children, who are not at all nice, is that little specks of evil and tiny faults have crept in and so keep the life of that boy or girl from running smoothly. We must get these little faults and evils out right away, such faults as story telling, bad temper, answering back, meanness, selfishness, and then everything will be well.

When there is anything wrong with our clocks we take them to the maker and he fixes them. When little sins and faults creep into our lives we must take them to God, our Maker and Father, and He will remove these evil things.

XXXVI

Looking-Glasses

(*Object: A looking-glass.*)

WE have often said to a boy or girl we know: "Would you like to see a monkey?" and of course they say: "Yes." Then we hold up a looking-glass before them and say: "There it is!" and they see their own face!

People love to look in looking-glasses, especially girls. Boys do not care very much about them but girls really have to have them. They want to see if their hair is nicely combed and if their hats are on straight and if their ribbons are tied just so. But we all ought to be glad that we have looking-glasses, for they show us just how we look, and it is a good thing to see ourselves now and then as others see us, so that we can correct any wrong things that may appear.

A looking-glass is a faithful servant of ours for it shows us exactly what we are. Here is one and if I look in it and smile, it smiles back. If I scowl at it and look very cross

and disagreeable, it is cross and disagreeable too.

Did you ever think that people are looking-glasses themselves? They are indeed. If we smile at them, they will smile back. There is a little girl in our Sunday-school and she is always smiling. When she smiles at me I simply cannot help smiling back. But if we are mean and grouchy, and look at other people with such an expression, we shall find that they are just the same. There is an old German proverb which goes like this: "With the hat in our hand we can go through the whole land." What it means is this: if we are polite and smiling every one will be glad to see us and will try their best to do things for us.

Let me read you a poem written by a wise writer which tells of a little man who tried to be happy and smiling all the time.

"Once on a time in far Japan,
There lived a busy little man,
So merry and so full of fun
That people called him In-door-Sun.

"Now, In-door-Sun made mirrors fine
Like those in your house and in mine
And in these looking-glasses bright
His own face saw from morn till night.

"It made him feel so very sad
To see his face look cross and bad
That he began to take great care
To keep a sweet smile always there.

"And soon he found that those he knew
All seemed to like him better too,
For, like the mirrors, every one
Began to smile on In-door-Sun.

"Now try this just one day and see
How bright and smiling you can be.
You'll find both happiness and fun
In playing you're an In-door-Sun!"

—I. G. THOMPSON.

Jesus Christ wants every one to be happy and His kingdom is a kingdom of smiling faces where there is no place for cross or disagreeable looks.

XXXVII

God's Power to Lift

(*Objects: A rubber comb, a piece of flannel, small bits of tissue paper.*)

THERE is a wonderful power in the world which is a mystery to every one. The wisest men do not know what it is. It is all about us but we cannot see it nor taste it nor smell it nor hear it nor understand it. We call it electricity. We only know it is in the world because we see some of the marvellous things it does. It travels along wires and lights the street-lamps and makes our houses bright, it rings bells, and cooks our food and warms us; it makes it possible for us to talk with people over the telephone and to send messages through the air. Indeed it does so many thousands of things for us that it is quite impossible to name them.

But there is a far more wonderful power in the world than electricity, a power which is indeed a mystery to every one. We call this

power God. God is very near us, within us, over us; we cannot see Him and we understand only a little about Him. The wisest men cannot explain to us all that we would like to know about God. But we know He is in the world because we can see the marvellous things He does. We know that He is near because we can feel Him close at hand. He too does so many thousands of things that it would be quite impossible to name them all.

Now just as though I were a magician, I want to call some electricity here and make it do something for us. I can do that by rubbing this black rubber comb with this piece of flannel. Electricity has come into this comb, strange as it may seem, electricity which is not very strong and which cannot hurt any one. I want to show you that it is here in this way. Here are some bits of tissue paper. If I bring the comb close to them the electricity will call to them and they will leap into the air and cling to the comb. (Show this.)

Do you know that God is seeking to do just that with our lives? He is calling to us all to come to Him. God has the power to lift human lives. Let us suppose these little pieces of paper are people. The larger pieces

are the big people and the small ones are the boys and girls of earth. God is calling to all.

While we have been looking at this comb a curious thing has happened. Some of the pieces have fallen off. (Becoming surcharged with electricity.) But others are still clinging to the comb. It is sad to say that some of the lives God lifts fall away from Him. They are the people who forget Him, who turn from Him, who become careless and heedless, who are attracted away from Him by other things. The ones who cling to God are the people who do not forget Him, the good, the kind, the loving, the loyal people of earth.

God once called to a little boy named Samuel and he cried out: "Here am I. Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." He clung to God all his life and tried his best to do his will. I hope that when God calls to us, and He is calling to us and speaking to us all the time, we shall answer as did Samuel. "Here am I. Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

If we cling close to God, our lives will be most happy and we shall be a blessing to many.

XXXVIII

Magnets

(*Objects: A horseshoe magnet, a small steel nail, several tacks, a piece of black paper or cardboard.*)

WE have all seen a magnet, I am sure. Perhaps we have some little fish at home that float in water which have a small iron rod on their noses. If we take a small magnet and hold it in front of the fish, they will follow it around just as though they were swimming. Magnets are most interesting things and are lots of fun to play with. The name comes from Magnesia, a district far across the sea. Once long ago a man, who had iron nails in his shoes, walked over some rocks there and he found that the nails stuck to the rocks. Then later he found that pieces of iron stuck to the nails.

In a magnet are tiny invisible electric currents and these make the magnet able to attract pieces of iron and steel. I have here a

magnet and if I hold it over some tacks and nails they jump into the air and hold fast to the magnet just as though the magnet called to them. It is not hard to make a magnet. For instance, I can take this steel nail and by drawing it across the magnet several times it will become able to attract and hold other small nails and tacks.

Once upon a time many years ago there came One on earth who became a great magnet. In Him were powerful currents of goodness and love and Divine power which made Him able to attract others. He said of Himself: "I will draw all men unto Me." Jesus our Lord spoke these words and all these years He has been drawing and attracting men and women and boys and girls unto Himself. And then, when these persons touched Him, He made them magnets and they went out and attracted others and so to-day we have millions of Christian people in the world. There are large and small Christians just as there are large and small magnets and flowing through them all are mysterious lines and currents of spiritual force and goodness which make them able to attract and draw others to goodness and to Jesus.

Let me show you how strong a magnet is.

Let us suppose this nail is a boy who is not a very good boy. Around him and over him there is a dark covering of wrong things which he has placed there, like this dark piece of cardboard. I wonder if the magnet will be able to attract and hold the nail in spite of this cardboard? (Show how it does this.) So the power of Jesus can reach down through the covering of evil and attract and hold us. Jesus can save us in spite of the wrong things in our lives and when He has won us and attracted us to Himself, then that dark covering of evil must go.

This little steel nail, which I made a magnet a moment ago, will not remain a magnet very long unless it goes back often to the great magnet and gets more strength from it. So the Christian must go frequently to Jesus and come in contact with Him and so keep His power of attracting others good and strong.

All the time Jesus wants to draw us nearer and nearer to Himself. He does not wish us to be far from Him. The closer we get to Him, the greater will be our power to attract, hold and help others and the stronger and happier our lives. I hope we will do our best to become strong, splendid, Christian magnets.

XXXIX

Getting Rid of Evil

(*Objects: Glass of water, small bottle of tincture of iodine, small quantity of salts of sodium hyposulphite, sometimes known as sodium thiosulphate, a spoon.*)

THE other day I took a walk through the woods and by and by I sat down to rest. There were a number of flat stones all around and I thought I would see what was underneath them, so I lifted up several. What do you suppose was there? The queerest collection of spiders and beetles and ugly black bugs and other funny looking insects that you ever saw! There was a small menagerie of them under each rock, and they made their homes there because they did not like the sunlight. As soon as the rock was lifted and the bright sunshine shone in, they hurried away as fast as they could to find another dark place in which to hide. Some crawled and others hopped and skipped and jumped and hobbled, some tumbled down and rolled over and over and others turned

somersaults, for they were in a frantic hurry to get away from the sunlight. Whenever you go into the woods or fields you must turn over some stones and see how the insects run.

This made me think of the little evils in the world that hate the light. Once they were shut down in a dark box, so a fairy story tells us, and a little girl who was curious to see what was inside, just like most little girls, opened the lid and peeped in and out flew all the troubles and evils, and they have been out ever since. A great many of them even try hard to get into the souls of girls and boys. Some of these little evils crawl and creep, and others steal along very quietly and then jump or hop. Some of them we call naughty tales, and others acts of meanness and selfishness and disobedience. There was once a little boy who was greatly troubled by these little black evils. He became disobedient and selfish, he was cruel to animals and to his sister, he answered back and said many bad words, and you can imagine how full his soul must have been with these evil things. Let us imagine that they entered his soul as this dark liquid enters this white glass. (Pour some of the tincture of iodine into the glass.)

How was he to get those evil things out of his soul? What was it made those little insects run away from under the stones? A great light. If a great light could come in and fill the soul of the little boy, then the dark, evil things would have to go. One day some one told him about Jesus Christ, about His wonderful life on earth, about His teachings and His kindness and His love. The little boy was told that if he took Him into his life, he would find Him a Saviour, a Master, a great Teacher and a loving Friend. And the little boy cried: "Oh, I want to be like Him! I wish He would come into my life and drive out these evil things!" He made up his mind that he would follow Jesus, and he told every one that Jesus had come into his life and that He was his Master and Saviour and Friend. Now when Jesus came into his life what do you suppose happened to the dark things that were there? They had to go away and his soul became white again, just like this. (Drop in some salts of the sodium and shake or stir a little; the mixture becomes perfectly white.)

If we take Jesus into our lives, that is what must happen to the dark, evil things that may be there.

XL

The Children's Crusade

(*Objects: A large white cross; give each child a small white paper cross and a pin.*)

YEARS and years ago we would have seen a very strange sight in Europe far across the sea. Hundreds of children were setting out from towns to go on a crusade. Their fathers and brothers had gone on crusades for many years. They had taken a cross in their hands and a sword and had put on armor and then had travelled in great armies to the Holy Land to free it from the Saracens. The children thought they would like to go, too. They had their mothers sew a cross on their coats, and they took little swords with them. Off they started, but they did not get very far. They became quite tired and homesick, they missed their nice warm beds and mother, they had very little to eat, some of them were shipwrecked and many became sick, so they turned and scampered back home. But don't you think this children's crusade was

a splendid idea even though it did not turn out well, for the children were not strong enough? They wanted so much to do something for Jesus Christ, and that is why they started out.

Every boy and girl to-day should have their spirit. They should want to do something for Jesus. They should long to go out and fight against the hateful evil things in the world. To-day on this Sunday, which is called Temperance Sunday, I am going to tell you what you can do. I am going to ask you to start out on a crusade, not to Europe or the Holy Land and not with swords in your hands to kill other people, for we do not believe in that any more, but a crusade right here in this land. The older people to-day would be happy if you would start right away on a crusade for purity.

I am sorry to say that there are many things in the world to-day that do not want us to be pure and good. There are men who swear and also children who copy them and say bad words. This is not being pure and good. Children even tell stories and speak of things that are not at all nice. If they do this, they are not being pure and good. There is another evil thing in the world called liquor. We have seen men who reel

and stagger about the streets and we are afraid of them and we may well be, for liquor has caught hold of them and they do not know what they are doing. We want the boys and girls of our land to fight against these wrong and hateful things. We want you to get a good start by beginning right now when you are young. To-day all over this country boys and girls are being urged to be pure and good and to go on a crusade against everything evil.

Now that we are going to send you on a crusade, and I am sure every one here will want to go, we wish you to have a sign of it. The sign is a beautiful white cross, the cross of Jesus Christ. We have given to you little white crosses. We want you to pin them on and wear them home and if any one asks you what they are, tell them you are going on a crusade. You can wear this cross every day or else pin it up in your room and every time you look at it, think of those children who many years ago went on their crusade to do something against evil for Jesus.

XLI

Our Flag

(*Object: An American flag; distribute to each child a small flag.*)

DO we know what happens on board every war-vessel of our government, at every army post, in our navy yards and in our soldiers' and sailors' homes when the sun goes down each day? Flying high in the air at each of these places and on each vessel is a glorious American flag. At sunset the flag is carefully lowered. Just before the sun sinks in the west you will see several soldiers or sailors gather round the flagstaff. Then a bugler sounds retreat, the sunset gun is fired, the soldiers stand at attention and salute and the flag is carefully lowered into the arms of a soldier or sailor who folds it up and does not allow it to touch the ground. While this is going on every one stands still, even if they are not soldiers, and the men take off their hats. I am sure if you have ever seen a flag lowered at sunset you will agree with me that it is a beautiful ceremony.

It is all done out of respect for the flag we love so much.

When we think of the flag our thoughts go back to the patriots who designed it. George Washington was one of them. Away back in 1776 with two other men he went to the shop kept by Betsy Ross in Philadelphia and there the first American flag was made. At first there were but thirteen stars, for there were only thirteen states. "We take," said Washington, "the star from Heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty."

From that time to this great hosts of American citizens have upheld that flag, have given their lives for it, have fought and labored earnestly for it, so that to-day our flag is the flag of a wonderful country and it is respected all over the world, for it is the emblem of liberty, hope, peace and good-will towards mankind.

The boys and the girls of to-day are the ones who are to uphold and defend our flag in the future, therefore we want you to honor and love it devotedly. But I wish to remind you that the flag is but a symbol of high and holy

principles, the principles of freedom, peace and brotherhood and that if we forsake them we dishonor our flag and we trail it in the dust. I have seen boys and girls dishonor our flag by calling poor foreigners, some of whom have become American citizens, such names as "Wops," "Dagoes," "Sheenies," "Guineas," and so forth. These boys and girls, I am sure, never thought they were harming our flag and the great principles for which it stands. These men and women are our brothers and they came to America expecting us to help them and teach them and love them. This we must do in every way that we can. I think it would be a splendid plan to keep a flag in our room, where we can see it, so that it will remind us that as we grow older we must labor with all our might to make it the flag not only of one nation but of all humanity, teaching the peoples of the world the wonderful abiding principles of peace, liberty, righteousness and brotherhood.

Now let us all rise and give the flag salute, as we have been taught to do in our schools, pointing to the flag and saying these words: "I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the republic for which it stands; one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

XLII

The Double-Headed God

(*Object: A small statue or picture of the god Janus.*)

IN the city of Rome, many years ago, there stood a great temple which had two immense gates. When there was peace these doors were kept closed, but in time of war they swung open and the Roman soldiers marched through them to do battle against their enemies. The god of that temple was named Janus and there was a large statue of him in the temple. Strange to say, he had two heads, one of them looking east and the other west or, as we might say, one forward and the other backward. He was the god of beginnings: of the beginnings of human life, of the day, and of the year, and therefore the first month in the year was named January after him. He was the guardian of all doors, too, for a door looks two ways, forward and back. I have here a little statue of him and you can see what a queer looking old god he was.

Whenever the end of the year comes and New Year's Day is at hand I feel very much like that double-headed god. I feel that I have two faces, one turned backward to look at the old year and one looking forward into the new. It is a good thing even for boys and girls at this time of the year to stop a moment and look both ways.

When we look backward at the old year, our memory begins to work and we remember many things that happened to us. It is just as though we looked into a mirror and there saw ourselves as we are to-day and all the daily events that have made us what we are. We see the long distance that we have come during the three hundred and sixty-five days, we see the dangerous places we avoided and the hills and valleys we crossed, we see the difficulties into which we fell and the many delightful times and places that gave us pleasure. It is a good thing to look back and see what our life has been. I am sure we will not be entirely pleased with the picture and that we will feel sorry it was not better.

As we look forward I hope you will remember a verse which Paul wrote: "Forgetting the things that lie behind (and though Paul tells us to forget, I think he means that

we must not brood over them and worry about them, feeling that, since we have done so poorly, it is no use trying to make the future better) and stretching forward to the things which are before I press towards the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Paul tells us that we are like runners running a race and that we must press ahead with all eagerness, trying our best to reach the goal. And the goal which God has set before us is a wonderful one. It is likeness to Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Let us resolve that we will try our best to be more like Him in the New Year. Let me give you three New Year resolutions as we look forward to running this race of the Christian. First, be better examples. Let our works and lives express the holy gospel we profess. Second, let us have more readiness for service. Be anxious all the time to lend a hand, forgetting ourselves. And third, be more faithful in service. Let us be good and faithful servants of God.

If we do these things we shall become more like Jesus every day, and at the end of each year we shall look back with greater satisfaction at the way it has been spent.

XLIII

The Driving Away of Evil

(*Objects: A branch of dead oak leaves; a branch of fresh green leaves.*)

LAST week I noticed a curious thing. I saw dead leaves falling from a tree! This is the spring time and we do not expect to see leaves falling now, do we? When do they fall? In the autumn. Then the birds sing farewell songs and fly away, then the days grow quite short and Jack Frost comes to visit us, then the flowers go to sleep and the butterflies are not to be seen. How sad the trees are because their little friends and playmates have gone! It seems as though they were really crying and that the lovely leaves which fall so softly upon the ground were their tears. But there is one old tree that will not let his leaves go. He holds on to them very tightly even though they turn from a beautiful green to an ugly brown. I wonder what tree that is? The Boy Scouts can tell, of course, for they know

all about trees. The oak tree, that is correct. All winter the leaves hung on that tree. The winds raged and tore at them, the snow and sleet beat upon them, Jack Frost called and called to them but the old oak tree held them very firmly. But at last the oak tree began to stir with new life. Through the trunk and into every branch and twig the sap began to run, and then the tree knew that the beautiful spring time had come. Everywhere he saw other trees putting on their robes of green and he grew ashamed of these dark, ugly leaves. So he allowed the sap to run out to the very tip of the twigs and then a wonderful thing happened. The leaves that could not be driven away by the fierce winds and storms were quietly pushed off each branch by the gentle force of the sap. If we look about this week we shall see these dark, ugly leaves falling just as though it were autumn.

Many people, just like that tree, hold on to ugly things which are called sins, and so very often force cannot drive them away. There may be evil and wrong things in our lives and people may punish us and threaten us and scare us and use force upon us but few of the evil things may go away. Punishment, threats, force will hardly move them. But by and by we come to know Jesus Christ,

and new life springs up in us. When His Spirit enters our lives the old, dark, ugly things flee away and in their place spring forth beautiful graces, just as green leaves like these came to take the place of the old, dark leaves on the oak tree. These graces are named in the Bible and they are these: "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and temperance."

XLIV

April Fool

(*Object: A large card with the words April Fool printed on it.*)

I WONDER what day comes next week, a day on which children have lots of fun? I am not going to tell you just yet but see if you can guess. On that day boys put an old pocketbook on the sidewalk and tie a string to it and then hide back of a fence. By and by some one comes along and tries to pick it up and then the boys pull the string and jerk the pocketbook away. Or else they put an old hat on the sidewalk with a brick under it and they laugh when some one kicks that hat. Or we ring the 'phone bell and tell sister that some one wants her on the 'phone when there is really no one there, or send brother on some foolish errand down the street, or perhaps place some covered dishes on the table and others open them expecting to see something real good in them but they are empty.

Now what day is it? April Fool's day.

Each time we do something funny we cry out "April Fool" or else we hold up a card like this with April Fool on it. It is a day when we do something silly, when we send people on foolish errands and make them do foolish things. I wonder why people ever began to do these things on this day?

Well, this day comes every year about the time when we are thinking of the death and suffering of our Lord. Years ago He was betrayed, you know, and cruel men caught Him and put Him in prison. Then one day He was sent to a high priest named Annas and he sent Him to another priest named Caiaphas. Then He was sent to the governor named Pilate and he sent Him to another governor named Herod. Our Lord was sent on foolish errands, for it did no good to send Him to this man and to that. It was because of the silly way in which He was sent here and there that years ago people began to do the same things to other people on this day.

I wonder if we know that the Lord Jesus comes and knocks at our heart's door even when we are very young? "Behold I stand at the door and knock," He says. Suppose we send Him away? Suppose we say: "Go away, go to somebody else." How sad our

Lord must be! Suppose we do not treat Him kindly but cruelly as those evil men did. Every time we are bad and naughty we are shutting the Lord out. He expected to have us open the door of our hearts and let Him come in to dwell with us, but when we would not let Him enter, it is just as though we said "April Fool."

There is a hymn which runs like this:

"O Jesus, Thou art standing outside the fast closed door,
In lowly patience waiting to pass the threshold o'er.
Shame on us Christian brothers, His Name and sign who bear:
Oh, shame, thrice shame upon us, to keep Him standing there!"

This is the first verse and to-day I wish that we might all say as a prayer the words of the last verse:

"O Jesus, Thou art pleading in accents meek and low,
'I died for you, My children, and will ye treat Me so?'
O Lord, with shame and sorrow we open now the door:
Dear Saviour, enter, enter, and leave us nevermore."

XLV

The Need of God's Sunshine

(*Object: A pot of hyacinths or jonquils.*)

IN the month of February some of us did a curious thing. We took a little bulb that looked something like an onion and put it in a clay pot and tucked earth around it Then we watered it and put it down in the dark, cool cellar. Every now and then we would go down and water it but each time it looked as though nothing had happened. We saw nothing but the pot and the dark earth but no little green plant. Yet something had happened. The bulb had begun to grow downward. It sent down roots into the earth that grew longer and longer. The air was too cold and there was no sunlight and so it did not grow upward. But by and by, just before Easter time, we brought the bulb up-stairs and put it where it could have light and be warm. Then how it grew! A little green plant peeped forth and one day a beautiful white blossom appeared, a blossom

that was as sweet as sweet could be and we cried: "Oh, see the hyacinth!"

What had done all this? The warm sunshine!

It is hard to believe, isn't it, that little children will one day grow up to be big and tall and blossom into lovely women and strong men. It was hard to believe that the little bulb would ever grow into a beautiful plant and bear a sweet blossom. But like the bulb, little children need to be placed in sunshine, in the warm sunshine of God's love. There are some poor children, it is sad to say, who are just growing downward, in dark cellars, in places where wickedness is, where good people never come and where loving messages about God are never heard.

Just as that little bulb needed the warm sunshine, so we all need God. We need to look up at God and have Him look at us. The little bulb looked at the sun and the sun smiled down upon it and drew out that lovely blossom and made the sweet perfume. We must seek God and we must not let any evil things keep His sunshine from us. Then the white flower of a beautiful character will blossom out of our lives and every one will be made happy, just as we are to-day by the sweetness and the loveliness of this hyacinth.

XLVI

Palm Trees

(*Objects : Some branches of a palm tree.*)

THERE is a verse in the Bible which says that people who are good flourish as the palm tree. I want to speak to you about palm trees, for this is Palm Sunday and many years ago the Lord Jesus rode into Jerusalem and men and women and boys and girls threw palm branches before Him because they were so glad to see Him.

Over here in America the Indians loved the birch tree above all others because it gave them birch bark for their canoes and was useful in many ways. Across the sea the English people are proud of the oak tree for it is so tough and strong ; but the people of the East, the Arabians and the Persians, say the palm tree is the most wonderful of all trees. Therefore when they said that a good person resembles a palm tree, they meant a great deal.

Palm trees grow straight up into the sky

with no crooks or bends in them. Some of them are so high that the Arabians say their tops are in heaven. They are very green and beautiful to look at.

The character of a good person grows up straight and true without any crooks or bends. The thoughts of a good person, his head, his whole life are lifted up above the earth. He grows away from the ground and goes up and up to be with God, so that his life, like the palm tree, seems to be in heaven.

Palm trees grow in the desert but the sand does not stop them from growing. They reach down with their roots and find little particles of earth and little drops of moisture and so they grow. A good life is not harmed by hard, rough things. They cannot stop us from being good if we want to be. A good life reaches around and feeds on good things: on good thoughts, talks, books, pictures, people, the church, the life of Jesus, and so it grows and nothing can stop it.

Palm trees are most useful. The Arabians say they can be used for more than two hundred and sixty things. Camels feed on the seed and branches; men eat the delicious dates; the fibre of the tree is valuable and, from the sap, oil and honey, soap and sugar are even made. The tree gives grateful

shade from the hot sun to man and beast and here in this land many of our fans are made from palm leaves. A good life is very useful. It can do, not only two hundred and sixty, but more than two hundred and sixty thousand helpful things for people. A good life comforts, cheers, helps, feeds people. People love to rest in the shade of a good life.

But there is one thing more about a palm tree. It points out something. It tells a secret. It tells that there is water somewhere near it and when the thirsty Arabs and camels see a grove of palm trees, they hurry as fast as they can to it, for they know there is a spring of cool refreshing water near by. Every good life, every Christian life points out something. It tells a secret, it tells that there is something near it which makes it grow. There is a spring near every Christian life. Jesus Christ is that spring. He is the water of life which makes a man or woman or boy or girl grow straight and beautiful and of service. And others, seeing that life, will hurry to it and want to find the wonderful secret of its growth and strength.

XLVII

Narcissus

(*Object: A stalk of the Poet's narcissus.*)

ONE of the most wonderful things about Easter time are the flowers. The store windows are filled with them; they are for sale on street corners; in hospitals and churches we see their smiling faces and we take them to our homes where we rejoice in their beauty. To-day on this Easter Sunday they are all about us. Here are stately lilies and fragrant hyacinths and golden daffodils and jonquils and also the beautiful narcissus. I have a narcissus here in my hand and while you look at it, I want to tell you a story about this flower.

It is an old, old story; we call it a fable or a legend. It is about a boy whose name was Narcissus. He was so fair and beautiful that he resembled an angel and he was loved by many people, but, I am sorry to say, he would not return their love. He was very proud of himself and very cold to others. He was

not at all respectful and would not answer politely when spoken to. He thought only of himself and of how good looking he was. This grieved many people and at last the queen of the fairies resolved to punish him. She said he must be punished by loving some one who would not love him in return. So one day while roaming through the woods he saw a shining pool of water and as he bent over to drink of it, he saw his own face in the water, though, strange to say, he did not know it was his own face. He saw this beautiful being looking at him from the pool and what do you think happened? He fell in love with this face, his own face! He sat there all day and talked to it and smiled at it and whenever he smiled, the face smiled back at him. He even tried to kiss the face but when he bent over and touched the water, the ripples made the face disappear. Day after day he sat there mourning because the beautiful face would not come out of the water and play with him and talk to him. He became pale and sad and would not eat. At last the queen of the fairies came and discovered that he had simply pined away, but in his place she found a beautiful flower which she called "Narcissus" after him. It is very lovely but quite frail and

soon droops after it is picked and fades away.

All these flowers about us to-day breathe the message of Easter. This message is the story of God's love for us; how, because of His great love for the world, He sent Jesus here who lived such a beautiful life, doing so many kind deeds and telling us such wonderful things about God, and then died and on Easter rose from the grave. Jesus told us that God loved every human being. How sad it would be if we were like Narcissus, so much in love with ourselves that we could not return God's love! How sad if we thought only of ourselves and led horrid, selfish lives caring nothing for others!

This is the message of Easter and it all has to do with the love of God.

"Oh, dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming love
And try His works to do!"

XLVIII

Forget-Me-Not

(*Objects: A bunch of forget-me-nots.*)

IN the month of June we have often seen a pretty little flower with five blue points and a yellow centre. They grow in cool, damp meadows and along the banks of streams. They are called forget-me-nots. Many beautiful memories are associated with this little flower. Perhaps father or mother has an old letter, and in that letter are a few faded forget-me-nots. Many people give the flower to some one whom they love and say: "Forget-me-not!" I wonder how it came to be called by this name.

There is an old legend which tells us that God once upon a time gave the flowers names. All the flowers came and passed before Him and He gave to one the name of rose, to another the name of violet; one He called heliotrope, another pansy, another daisy, another buttercup, and so on. Then, last of all, came this little flower and He

named it and all the flowers ran off laughing and dancing because beautiful names had been given them. But the little flower that came last suddenly began to cry, and said: "Oh, I have forgotten my name!" All the flowers were sorry to hear this, but no one of them remembered what it was. They advised the little flower to go back to God and ask Him what it was, so back she ran and at last found God and cried: "Oh, I am so sorry, but I have forgotten my name. Won't you please tell me what it is?" And the dear Lord looked tenderly at the little flower and said: "Forget-me-not." So the little flower ran off again very happy, for now it had a beautiful name.

How forgetful we are apt to be! We forget errands, we forget to write loving letters, we forget to say kind words, we forget to do work that ought to be done. And after we forget we are generally sad and unhappy. We even forget people—we forget at times all about father or mother or brother or sister or friends and think only of ourselves. But there is One whom we must never forget. That One is God. And He says to us as He said to the little flower: "Forget-ME-not."

XLIX

Smiling Daisies

(*Objects: A bunch of daisies.*)

THERE is an old song that tells of a little boy who thought the stars were daisies that dotted the meadows of the night. He thought, too, that the moon was a lady sweet and fair who picked the stars and cast them down into the meadows of the town, so that when he arose in the morning there were no stars in the sky, but everywhere amid the green grass he saw the smiling faces of many daisies. Isn't that a beautiful thought? Perhaps the stars say to each other: "All the boys and girls will be sorry not to see us when it is day. We are the little candles of the night, we are the night flowers that bloom in the heavens, we are the eyes of the night and surely children would like to have some little candles of the day, they would like the day to have some bright eyes as well as the night. We are glad the moon is to pick us and drop us down into the earth meadows."

How glad we ought to be for the daisies! They can teach us many wonderful things. Jesus tells us to remember them. He says in the Bible, "Consider the flowers of the field," and He meant the daisies as well as other flowers. "Think of these flowers!" said Jesus. Even great King Solomon, with a gold crown on his head, with a beautiful crimson robe about him, seated on his throne of purest ivory, was not half so beautiful as these flowers. I wonder what it is the daisies tell us?

They sing a song of happiness. Daises love the light. It is seldom that we can find them blooming underneath a tree or in the woods or in shady places. They do not like the blackness of the night, for when night comes they fold their white petals over their lovely faces and then go to sleep. But they love to grow right out in the meadows where the sun is warm. There they are happy. It seems to me that daisies are always smiling. It seems as though they are saying: "This world is a beautiful place. I hope you are as happy as we are."

In the centre of each daisy is a golden heart. This golden color stands for all that is precious in life. It is the color of the metal gold, it is the color of the warm sun-

beams, it is the color of the fire which cheers us and cooks for us and does so much good in the world. Around the golden heart is a circle of white petals and these speak to us a message of purity and goodness. They tell us that goodness is the best thing in the world.

So then the daisies tell us that life is rich and rare, that life is good and sweet. They call to us: "Oh, little boy and girl, and man and woman, smile and be happy. This earth is a beautiful place and life is not meant for sadness and gloom and weariness. Smile and be glad."

Let us thank the dear Lord to-day for the message of the smiling daisies.

L

Shining Stars

(*Object: A silver star made of cardboard painted with silver or aluminum paint.*)

ONCE upon a time, says a great writer, there were two children, a brother and sister, who used to wonder all day long at the beautiful things that filled the world. They wondered at the beauty of the flowers; they wondered at the height and blueness of the sky; they wondered at the goodness and power of God who made the lovely world; they wondered too at the little star children who seemed to be playing at hide-and-seek in the sky the night long. There was one clear shining star that used to come out in the sky before the rest near the church spire. Every night they used to watch for it and whoever saw it first cried out: "I see the star!" They grew to be such friends with it that, before lying down in their beds, they always looked out once again to bid it good-night

and they would say softly: "God bless the star."

I know that we too have wondered at the stars. I know that we have watched for them and have thanked the dear Lord for them all. I know we love them because they are so bright and shining and because they twinkle so merrily and always seem to be so glad. Here is a silver star, but the stars in the sky are much brighter than this. How many points have they? Five. And when do we see them? Only at night. I wonder what becomes of them in the daytime? I wonder if they fold these five little points over their faces and go to sleep when they see the great sun coming up? I wonder if they say: "The little boys and girls on earth won't need us now, for the sun is so bright and beautiful, but when night comes we will shine merrily again for them."

There is a verse in the Bible that I want you to remember. It says: "They shall shine as the stars forever and ever." This does not mean that the stars are going to shine forever and ever, for all stars grow old and fade away. There are baby stars and middle aged stars and old gray-headed stars. And there are stars which are black, but these we cannot see. Only the

stars which are bright and sparkling can be seen, and these are the ones we like. But some people, says the Bible, are going to shine just like the stars, yet instead of going out and fading away, they are to shine forever and ever. These are the people who become good and who do good, who are kind and thoughtful and loving. Everywhere they go, they shine and spread sunshine. They shine in the dark places of the world, and wherever they are, people are glad because of their merry light. Suppose there were no stars in the sky. How black it would be! Suppose there were no good people shining in the world. What a dark, miserable place it would be! Well then, the more good people there are, the brighter and happier will be the world. With such people God is well pleased and I do not wonder that He wants them to be with Him forever and ever.

LI

The Lovely Song of a Pleasant Voice

(*Object: A jar containing about a dozen crickets together with some grass and leaves, the top covered with netting. These crickets chirped for the writer during the entire address.*)

I WONDER if you know much about crickets? You know of course that there are crickets in the fields, for you have seen them jumping around and you have heard them chirping out-of-doors, but I wonder if you know that there are crickets that love to live in our homes? Perhaps you have an open fireplace in your house, and if so, I am quite sure you will find a cricket hiding in some crack in the hearth and that you will hear him chirping away for dear life. I wonder if you know that the Japanese people love crickets so that they make little cages for them and keep them in their rooms the year round, for their chirping is so pleasant and nice to hear. I wonder if you know that crickets love the sunshine and all warm cozy

places and that those in the fields would be happy if they could get into our homes where they could be warm all the time.

Last week I saw some poor little children on a street in the city who had no home, who were wandering around cold, wet and hungry. Of course they did not sing, for they were sad and weary. But in the world there are some good people, not enough of them, I am sorry to say, who go out and search for such children and put them in warm homes and then, how the children sing and how happy they are! Last week I also saw some other children who happened to live in nice homes, but they were not singing. They were quarrelling with each other and crying; they were grouchy, mean, disagreeable and complaining. They were not at all like the little crickets that always sing when they are in a warm place. But I saw many other children, I am glad to say, who were happy and glad in their homes. There was a warm fire in each home that made the whole house cozy and comfortable and that cooked nice food. The children were sitting around the fire and watching the fire-fairies and some were curled up in mother's lap while she told them fairy stories. And how happy the children were! They sang like little crickets.

I have some crickets here in this jar and I want you to hear them sing. Hear them, how cheerful they are! It is warm in this room and they are glad to be here with children all about them! Surely we can say that a verse in the book of Ezekiel applies to them, that they are "the lovely song of a pleasant voice."

I wish that in our homes we all might be like these little crickets. We should thank the dear Lord for our home and its warmth and its food and for father and mother love and all the good things there. If we sing as do these little crickets—hear them—every one will be glad. All the old frets and cares will be driven away. Sunshine will always be in the house, no matter if it is rainy and dark outside. Every one will say of us: "Oh, I am so glad that there are little crickets in this house, crickets that sing the whole year round. They sing lovely songs, they have most pleasant voices and they make us all happy."

LII

Thistles

(*Objects: A thistle in bloom and thistle that has gone to seed with the down on top.*)

THE other day I was pulling weeds in my garden and all of a sudden I said "Ouch!" for something that was sharp had pricked my hand. I found I had caught hold of a thistle and I wondered why thistles had been put on earth.

I looked up about thistles in several books and found out some interesting things. Thistles grow all over the world except in very cold countries. They are so thick in Scotland that the Scotch people have made the thistle their national flower and have placed it on their coat of arms. There is an old story that, once, a great army came to attack an army of the Scotch people all of whom were sound asleep. As the enemy crept through the grass to surprise the Scotchmen, one man fell into a bed of thistles and he cried "Ouch" so loudly that the Scotch people woke up and fought with the enemy and

overcame them. No wonder that Scotchmen love the thistle.

Thistles grow in desert places and there such animals as the goat could not live unless there were thistles to eat. Thistles are plentiful in the Holy Land where our Saviour lived and probably there were some thistles in the crown of thorns they placed upon His head when He hung on the cross, only the thistles must have been sorry that they had to make Him suffer so.

People even boil thistles till they are soft and eat them and they make some kind of medicine out of them and also dry them and light their fires with them. So you see a thistle is quite a great deal of use after all.

Over here nobody eats thistles, not even goats, for there are so many nicer things to eat and nobody makes them into medicine or burns them except farmers who want to get them out of their fields. Over here a thistle just seems to grow because it is beautiful. Mr. Beecher once said that the thistle is the prince of flowers. It stands in the fields with a bright blue crown on its head and has hundreds of tiny swords on the leaves which seem to say to every one: "Go away! You must not touch my crown!" By and by the blue crown fades away and

changes into the softest, silkiest down imaginable. Wise people tell us that the fairies make their tiny beds out of this down. You can see how white and soft it is by this piece I have in my hand. I can imagine that old Mother Nature was laughing at us when she made the thistle. First she showed us that she could make something very, very sharp and then she showed us that she could make something as soft and silky as anything in the world and this she placed right in the midst of the great sword-like leaves.

I have been thinking that you and I have something which we must guard and protect as carefully as the thistle does its crown. The beautiful crown of our lives we call the soul. We must place around it on every side, just as the thistle does, hundreds of little swords and fight off every evil thing that tries to harm it. Then if any creeping temptations or any crawling sins come along, they will find they cannot harm it, because, armed with faith, hope and love and drawing our strength from Jesus, just as the thistle draws its strength from the ground, we shall be more than conquerors over everything that would injure us.

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